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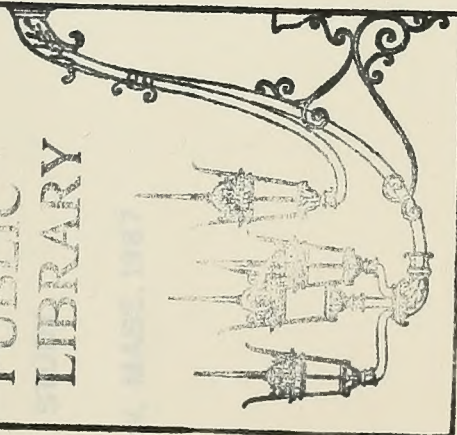
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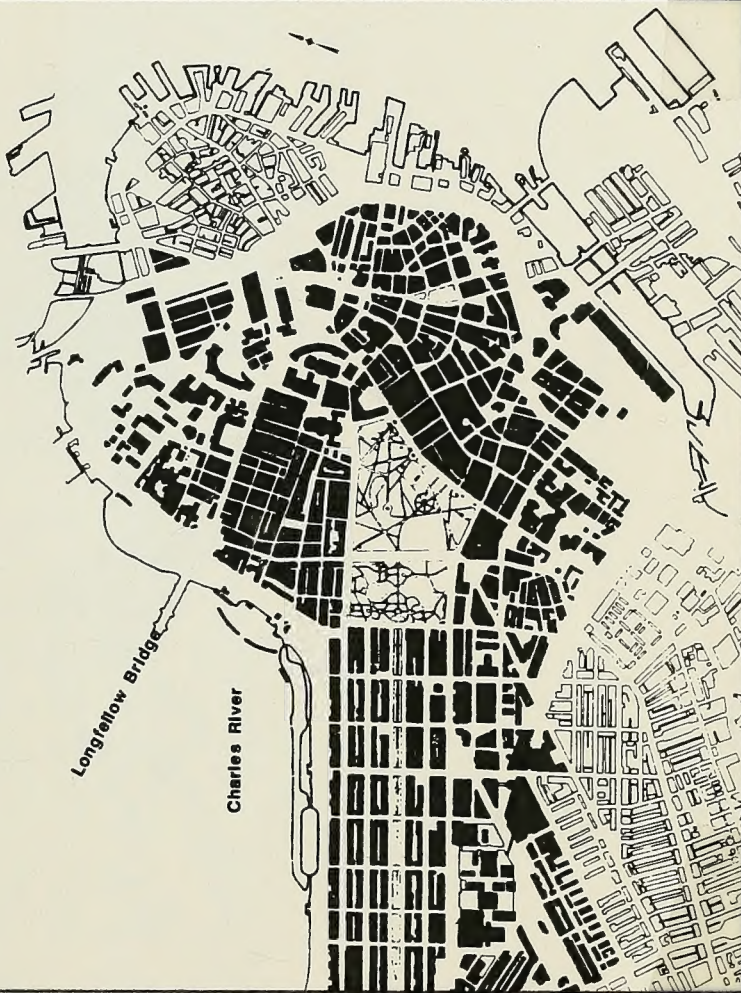
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"CAMBRIDGE STREET"

STUDY

BOSTON, MASS. 1987







"CAMBRIDGE STREET"

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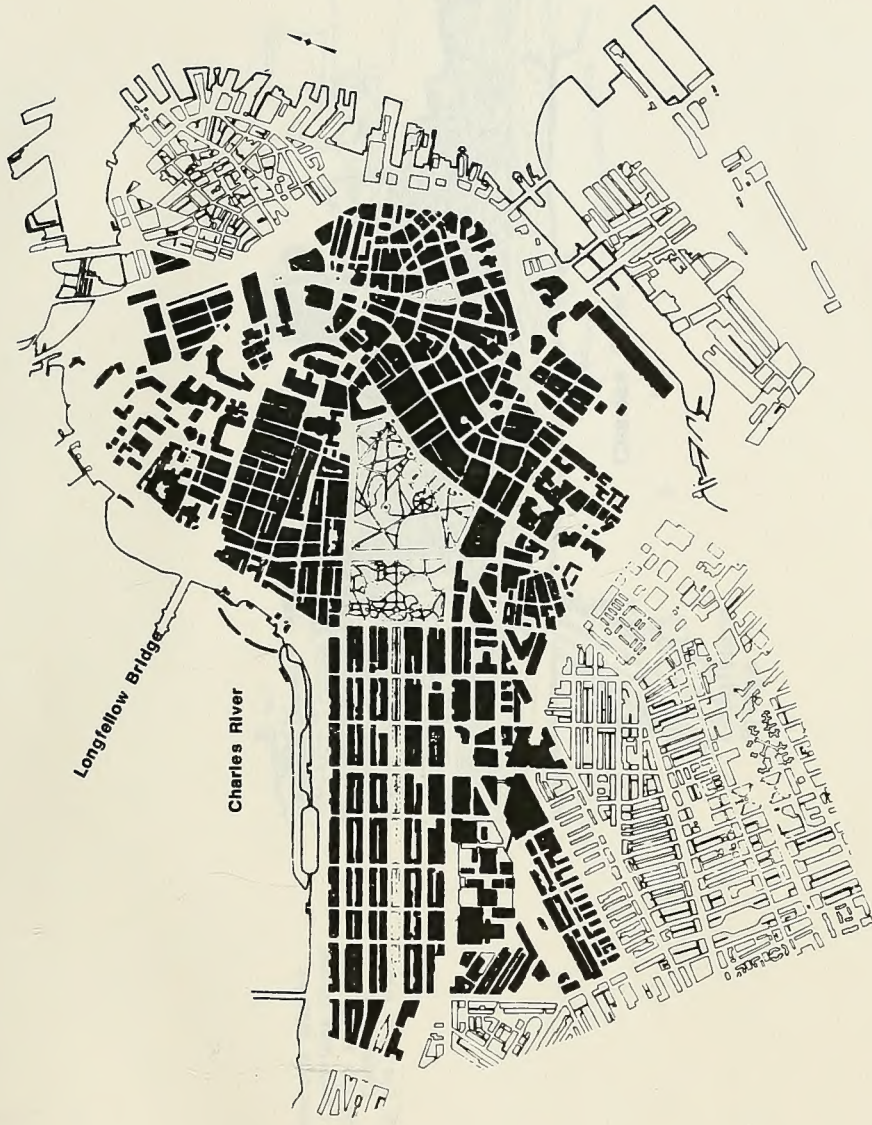


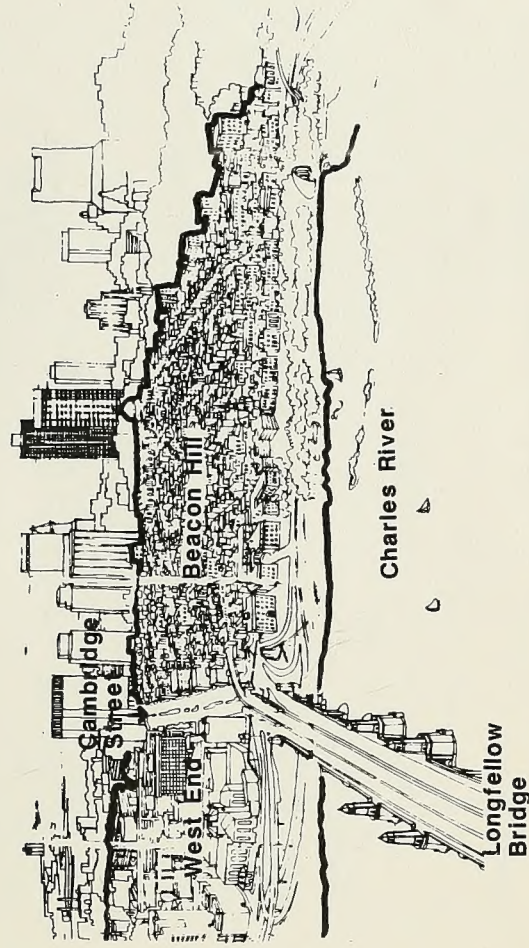
FIGURE GROUND SHOWING THE FABRIC OF THE CITY (BOSTON)





CAMBRIDGE STREET: Location

Cambridge Street is a short linear street which connects Cambridge district with Government Center and downtown. Gradually sloping, Cambridge Street acts as an edge to historical district (primarily residential) on the south side and the west end (Mass General Hospital) on the north side. Cambridge Street also neighbors the Charles River and Storrow Drive on the west and Government Center on the east.



RIVER VIEW OF CAMBRIDGE STREET





## I. PHYSICAL FACTORS:

The beginning of Cambridge Street - "Charles Circle" - is flat and broad. The neighboring Longfellow Bridge which spans over the Charles River becomes an extension of Cambridge Street. After a straight upwards (low elevation point +16 and a high elevation +46) approximately 1/4 of a mile distance, Cambridge Street starts curving through Bowdoin Square until it ends at Government Center.

The major existing activity nodes are:

1. Charles Circle (beginning of the street);
2. Charles River Plaza (about mid point of the street); and
3. Bowdoin Square (highest point at the end of the street).

From an Urban Design Point of View:

Cambridge Street is abutted by two very distinct and opposing urban forms. The north side's figure ground reflects a modern planning approach similar to the traditional "campus plan" or "master plan". Where as on the south side the figure ground reflects the notions of an 18th century city.

The most apparent impact of Cambridge Street is its variety of buildings low and high and a variety of uses such as business, institutional and residential. Individual buildings are scattered around on the north side with many different uses; for example, historic house, historic church, library, shopping center, Holiday Inn, gas station, parking garage, jail, subway entrance, etc. On the south side mostly brick row buildings create a dense street edge (with commercial at the bottom, residential at the top and some underutilized one-story buildings randomly located at street blocks housing fast-food services, grocery shops, liquor store, etc.)

Main Views of Cambridge Street:

Approaching Cambridge Street from Longfellow Bridge or Storrow Drive, one is confronted by the vast Charles Circle, a congested intersection with heavy automobile traffic below and Red Line MBTA subway trains up above. Once you read all the signs and arrows you proceed forward to Downtown/Government Center which is most direct and less confusing. Very wide Cambridge Street is bare with few trees on the north side and a strip of bare island in the middle. The tall J.F.K. towers mark the

end of the street on the main axis; closing off the skyline. After approaching Bowdoin Square one feels the height and the curvature of the street towards Government Center. At Bowdoin Square, one can see City Hall as an enclosure of the square and in the background famous tall Custom's House Tower, rising over the skyline among the many tall buildings of Boston. Thus one finds the spatial enclosure of Cambridge Street to be incoherent. The east and west ends are closed through the use of very different urban elements. Additionally, the north and south sides are defined by contrasting arch typed building forms.

Coming in closer, Cambridge Street offers views to historical sites. On the south side through Temple and Hancock Streets one can see State House (by Charles Bulfinch, built 1795) and up the hill, a view of Beacon Hill in its entirety. On the north side of Cambridge Street three major historical landmarks are built right on the street edge. Otis House (1795), Old West Church (1806), and recently relocated Physician's House. On the same side another architecturally significant building is Suffolk County Jail (1851). Not too far from the jail one catches a glimpse of Bulfinch Building (1846) through North Grove Street.

Landmark Buildings: (see photo's and history section)

1. Old West Church (1806)
2. Otis (First Harrison Gray) House (1795)
3. Physician's House (1891)

Special Features:

1. River View - Charles River is a neighbor on the west side offering view to nature and a pedestrian walk at Esplanade.
2. Historical District, Beacon Hill is a neighbor on the south.
3. Landmarks
4. Provides views to some historical buildings - Bulfinch Building, State House, Custom's Tower.

The historical and cultural heritage of the area must be saved from demolition and also should be incorporated into future development proposals. This preservation of landmark buildings and districts such as Beacon Hill is imperative to bond the present with the past.













MAJOR AXIS and MAJOR VIEWS

Custom's  
Tower

City Hall

J.F.K.  
Building

Government Center

West End

Seacoast Mills

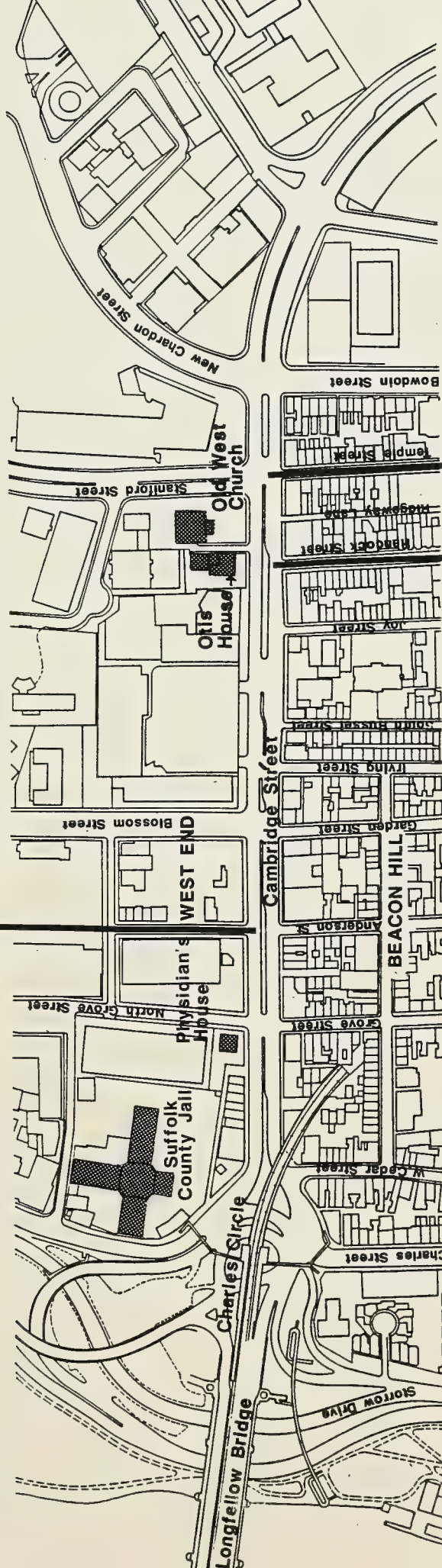
Longfellow  
Bridge

Charles River





Bulfinch Building



State House



LANDMARKS, MAJOR BUILDINGS and VIEWS TO HISTORICAL BUILDINGS





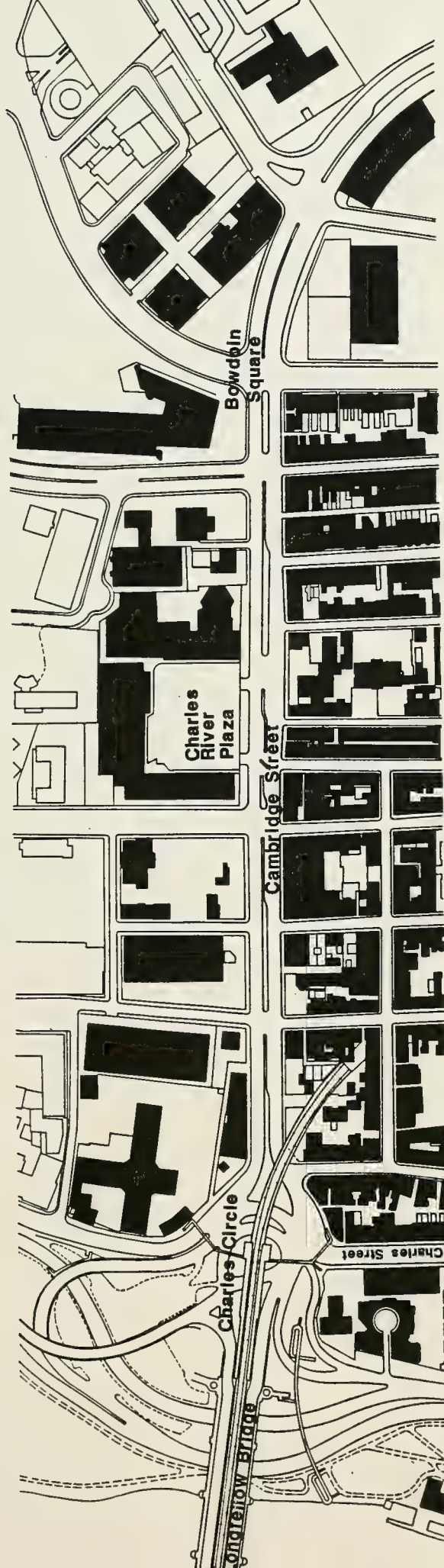
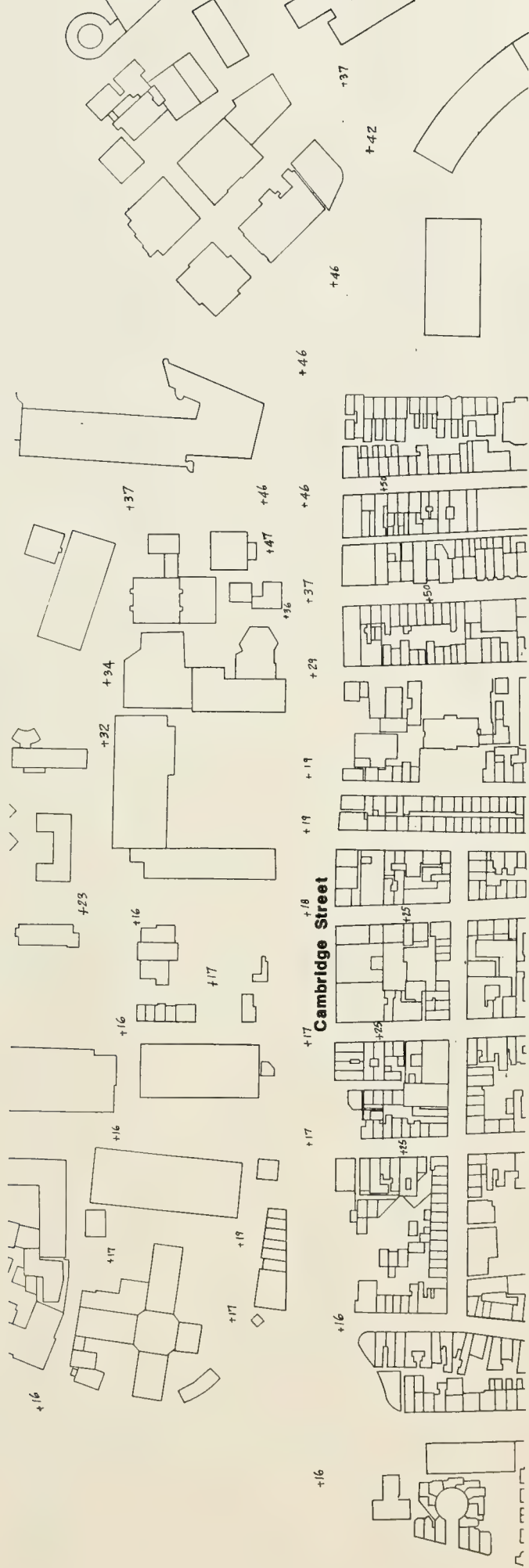


FIGURE GROUND OF EXISTING BUILDINGS







POINT ELEVATIONS Scale 1"=200'



## II. TRANSPORTATION

The competing automobile, pedestrian and public transit traffic at Charles Circle make it one of Boston's most congested and noisy intersections. Bowdoin Square also with its many lanes and many turns, becomes impossible to cross. These two major activity nodes of Cambridge Street require new design of open spaces and rerouting the traffic.

The goal is to create a better environment for the pedestrians. All service, garage and vehicular entries should be eliminated off Charles Street especially on the north side. Entrance and exit from the Charles River Plaza Garage should only be off from Blossom Street.

### Pedestrian Car Conflict

Dangerous confrontation between pedestrians and automobiles along the street on the north and south sides exist in the present layout. In the shorts trip of Cambridge Street there are four big intersections:

North Grove - Cambridge Street  
Blossom - Cambridge Street  
Stanford - Cambridge Street  
Bowdoin - Cambridge Street

Cambridge Street for its pedestrians in the present condition is a "one sided street" with no interaction between the north and south sides. North side of the street contrasts interestingly with the south side in scale, type of land use, building forms, materials and the pattern of intersecting streets. This creates a condition where most of the pedestrians walk on the south side.

## III. DISTRICT ISSUES

1. Lack of Image. As an urban space it lacks character and unity.
2. Underutilized Sites. Major demolition should take place to clean and open space for new buildings of distinctive quality.

3. New buildings versus reuse of existing buildings. New buildings and new landscaping are necessary to build a new image.

4. Lack of Memorable Sites. Development and redesign of important nodes to create memorable spaces such as Charles Circle, Charles River Plaza Bowdoin Square.

### IV. ZONING: Boston Zoning Use Designations and Procedures

There are three general zoning classifications in Boston which are broken down into a total of eight districts. The letter designation indicates the type of zoning district. The first "number" after a district indicates the maximum allowed floor area ratio (FAR). A second "number" is added to districts in some locations indicating a maximum height limit.

### Zoning Classifications at Cambridge Street

#### A. Residential

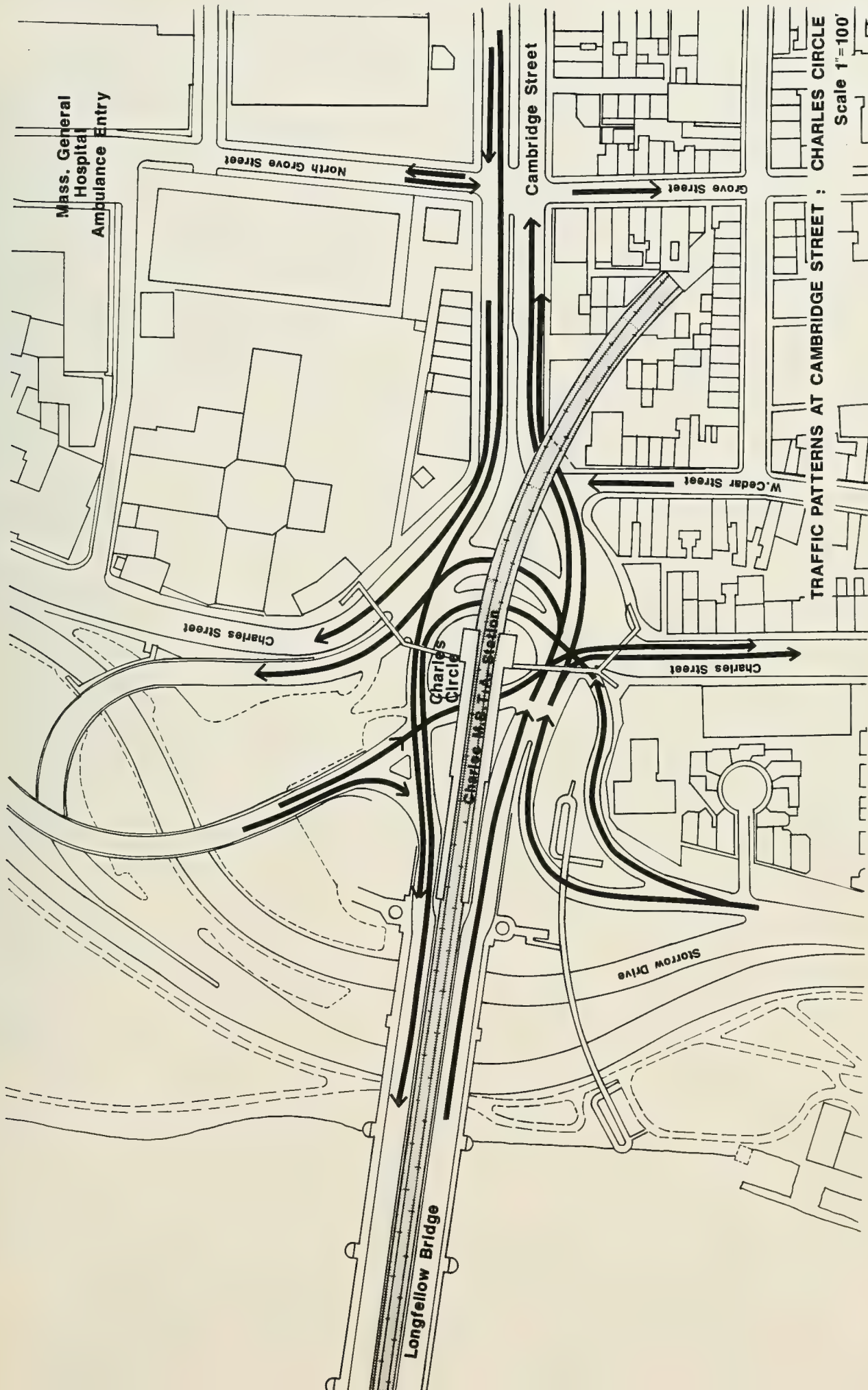
1. (H) Residential Apartments: all residential uses are allowed; lodging houses are conditional; all retail/business uses are conditional or forbidden; all warehousing, manufacturing and industrial uses are forbidden. In the H-4 district, according to the new Interim Planning Overlay District (IPOD) the height limit is 65'-0" all around Cambridge Street.

#### B. Business

1. (L) Local Business: All residential uses are allowed; professional offices are allowed; local businesses are allowed to operate between 6:00 a.m. and 12:00 midnight; all warehousing, manufacturing and industrial uses are forbidden at L-2-65, L-2 districts.
2. (B) General Business and Office: All residential uses and most office, retail and business uses are allowed; most industrial uses are forbidden in B-4 and conditional in B-8.







Mass. General  
Hospital  
Ambulance Entry

North Grove Street

Cambridge Street

Charles Street

W. Cedar Street

Charles Street

Charles Circle

Charles M.G.T.R.A. Station

Storrow Drive

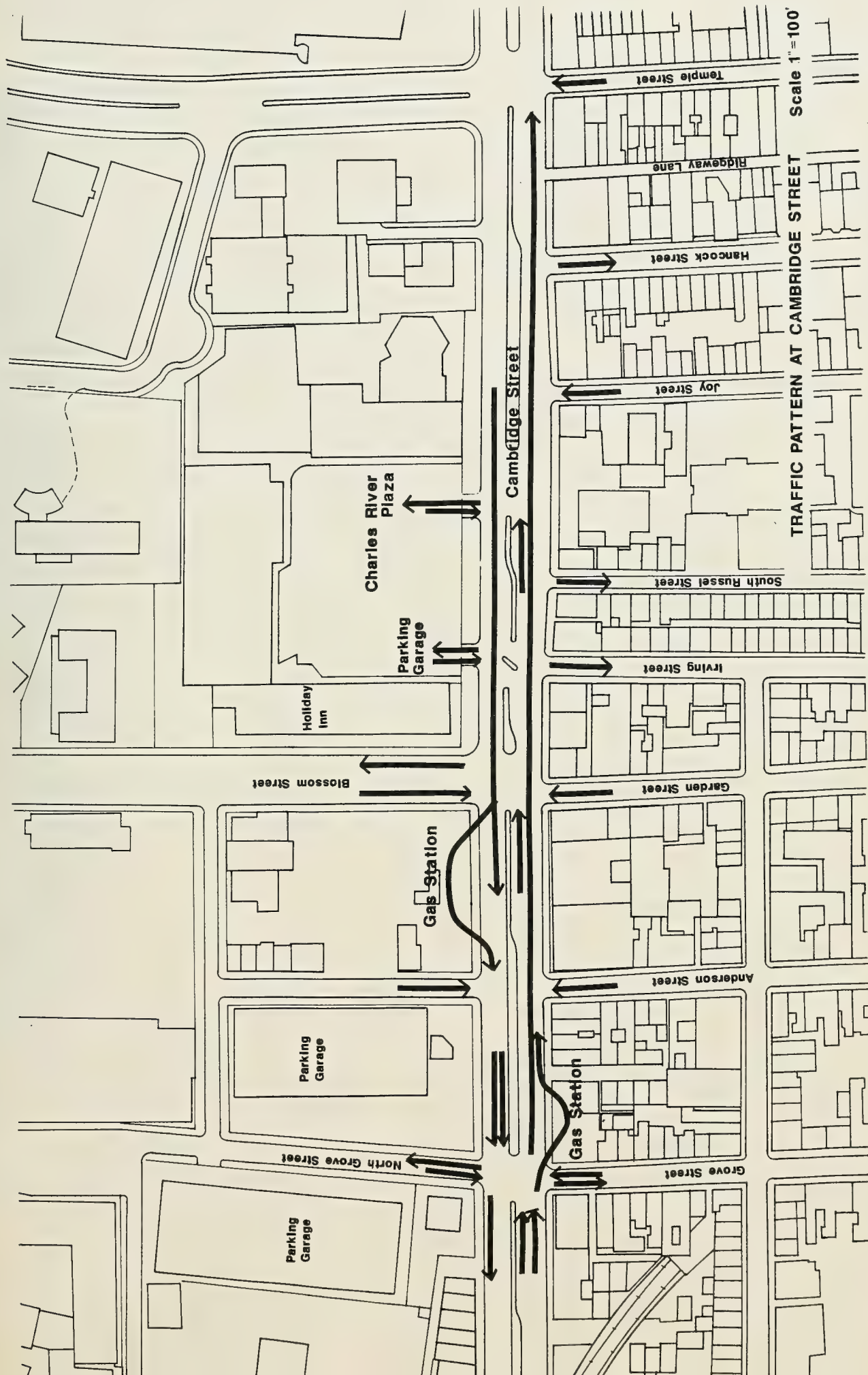
Longfellow Bridge

TRAFFIC PATTERNS AT CAMBRIDGE STREET : CHARLES CIRCLE

Scale 1"=100'











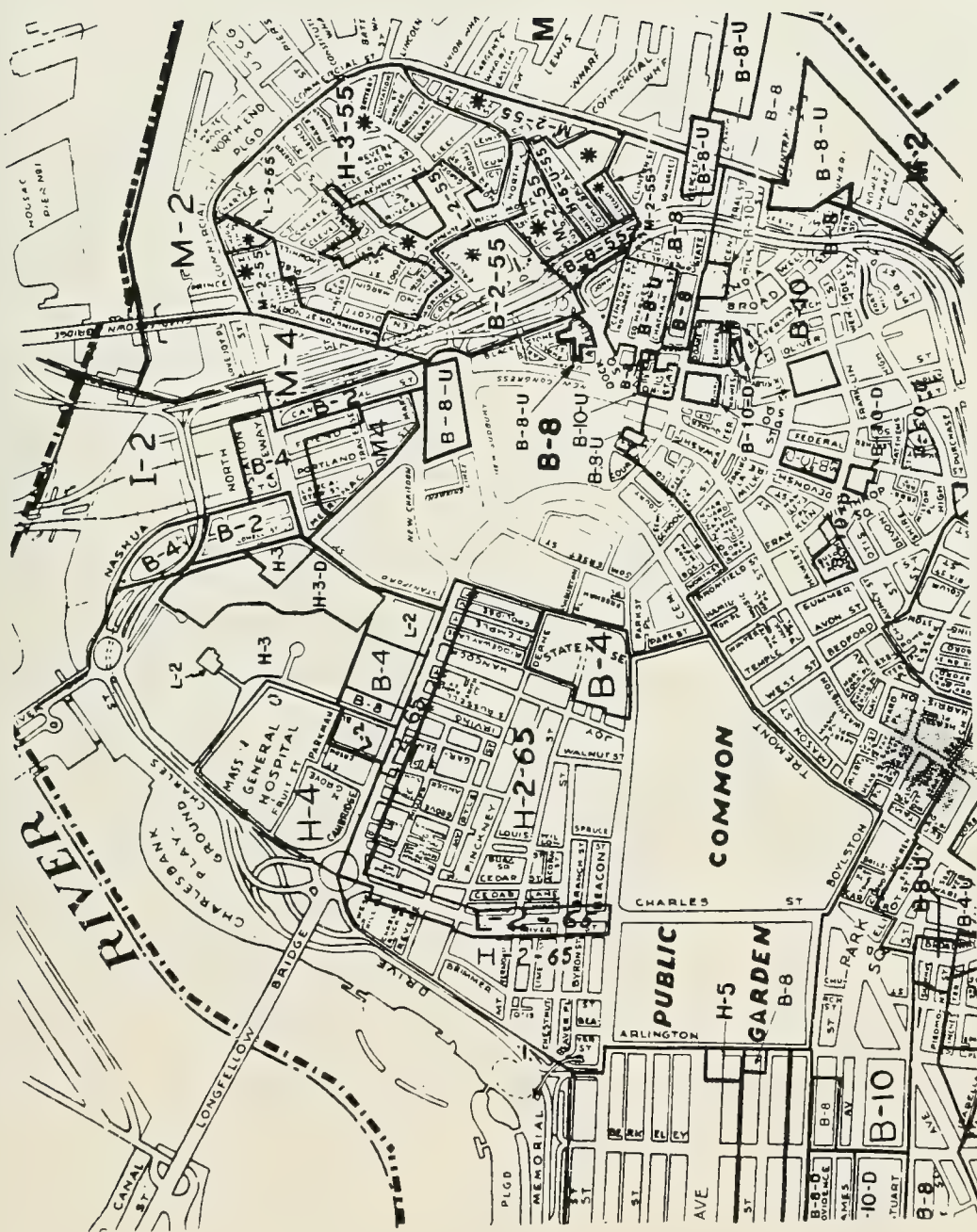
BOWDOIN SQUARE

TRAFFIC PATTERNS AT CAMBRIDGE STREET :

Scale 1"=100'



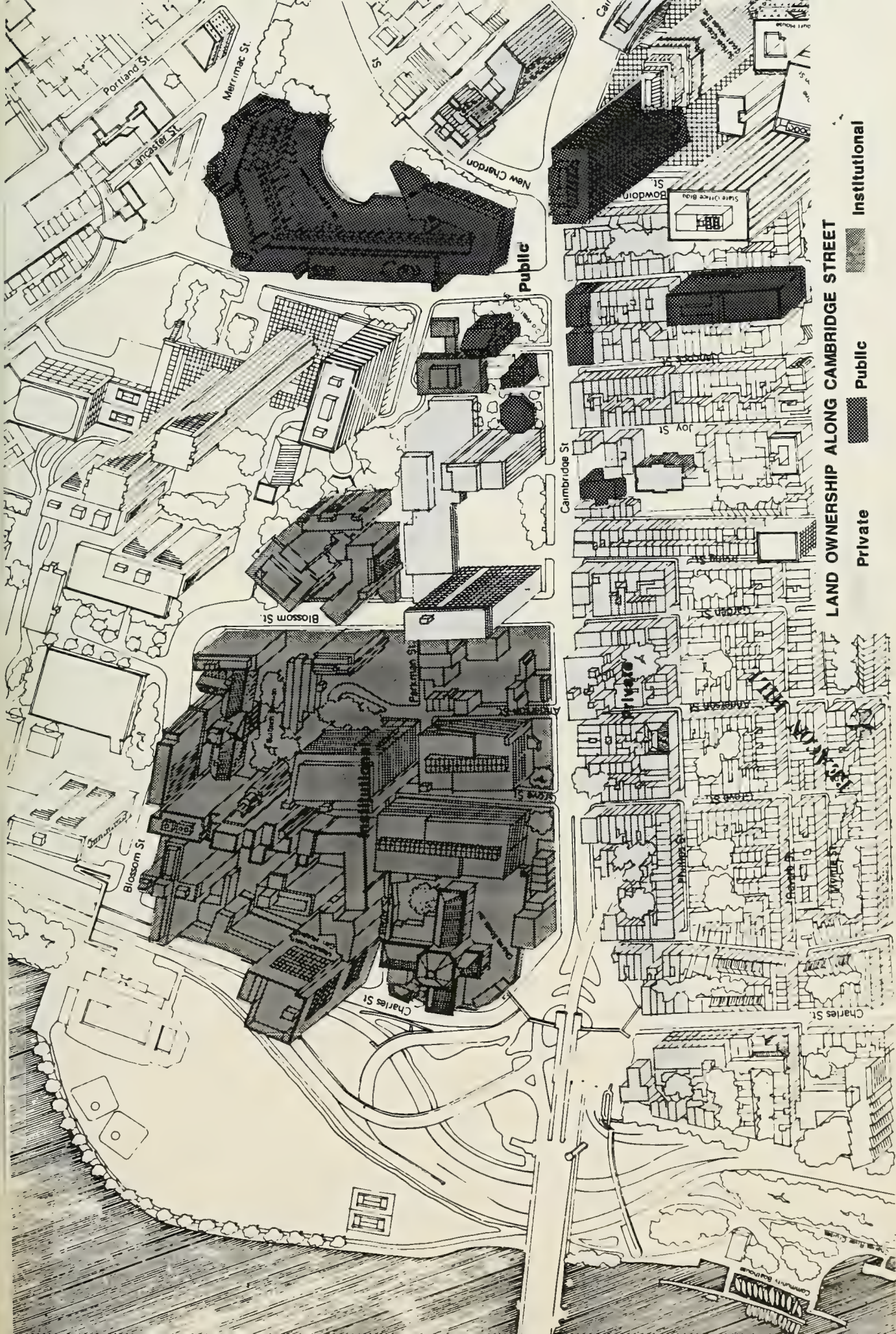




## ZONING MAP







LAND OWNERSHIP ALONG CAMBRIDGE STREET

- Public
- Private
- Institutional





## V.

### URBAN DESIGN OF CAMBRIDGE STREET

Urban design study of Cambridge Street should deal with buildings and linkages between them; open spaces around buildings, courtyards, plazas, and the transportation facilities which provide access to them. The goal is to create a city street of totally new image.

#### Growth:

1. There is an opportunity to develop street frontage with active commercial uses along Cambridge Street with residential above. Along the ground floor more specialty shops, service establishments, good shops and good restaurants, galleries, theaters and clubs on the north side as well as the south side will reinforce activities at pedestrian level.
2. Underutilized parcels in the west end area, dominated by institutional character and poorly integrated to Cambridge Street, have great potential of giving a new image to the city by a new concept. Massachusetts General Hospital master plan should be developed in such a way that it reflects a campus with cluster and courtyard buildings to be contained with low brick, decorated wrought iron walls and many monumental gateways. (Example: Harvard University Campus in the middle of Cambridge.)
3. Underutilized buildings on the south side; demolition of one-story buildings is necessary to develop new buildings of distinctive quality as infill to create the frontal and visual response to the Cambridge Street.
4. Present buildings which turn their ends or sides to Cambridge Street should change orientation to face Cambridge Street. This way they can have a relationship and close contact to the street as well as to the pedestrians. Cambridge Street should not be a back edge to Beacon Hill nor an unidentified border to the West End. It should have its own identity as a pleasant boulevard with new building and gates creating a continuous visual line with their uniform scale, commercial use, and pedestrian oriented character.

5. Arrangement of buildings so as to provide light and air to street.
6. Protection and enhancement of views.
7. Boulevard: Cambridge Street from the river to Government Center can be upgraded by a range of improvements including wider sidewalks. Present pedestrian movement reveals a need for wider sidewalks everywhere, especially at key areas, such as Mass. General entrance, shopping center entrance and in front of historical sites.
  - a. Eliminate the middle island to add the width to the side walks on both sides.
  - b. Or eliminate a traffic lane in each side to create wider sidewalk with trees and benches.
  - c. Special paving (example: existing Temple Street where it joins Cambridge Street is paved with red Boston brick which is very pleasant.
  - d. Many more trees (standard and flowering) on both sides of the street. If middle island has to stay, it should be designed so it has the same width throughout its length and it can have flowers, low bushes planted in it, to give color and visual line to the eye.
  - e. New Distinctive Lights
  - f. New additions such as water displays and outdoor urban art at major squares.
  - g. Shortening walking distance from by way of a plaza, arcade, passageway. In fast growing cities plazas for public amenity, setbacks for light and air amenity, low coverage of upper floors and view protections are very important.





#### Street Goals:

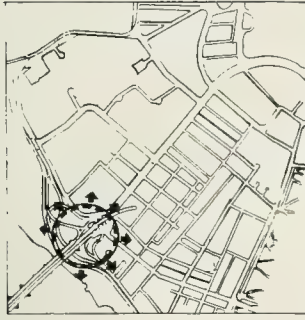
- o Preserve historical buildings.
- o Enlarge sidewalks and create more pleasant walks with trees, benches and street lights.
- o Reroute traffic (cut down number of cars).
- o No service entrances off Cambridge Street. Eliminate entrance and exit from Charles River Garage.
- o Eliminate gas stations.
- o Redesign Charles Circle, the center islands, reroute traffic, eliminate some turns. Upgrade the station itself; use transparent materials to give a light feeling and introduce bright colors (example: metal with paint) to make it more attractive from inside and outside.
- o New pedestrian bridges, with light colorful materials to replace existing bridges at new locations.
- o New second foot bridge addition from the square to the Esplanade is necessary to provide more access to the nature (location north of Cambridge Street between the Jail and the river.)
- o Develop Charles River Plaza Shopping Center into becoming an important node of the street. Existing Charles River Plaza Shopping Center has a suburban character which is not appropriate for its location. It should be a city plaza with 2-3 story high building additions at the street edge with shops and cafes creating a lively street edge while providing interior courtyard, with urban art, benches and trees.

- o Opportunity also exists at Bowdoin Square to make a grander circle, emphasis being on "one big square" rather than too many little plazas divided by wide streets Cambridge and New Chardon. Existing plazas are hard to use with their level changes from the street and dividing walls or planters. Bowdoin Square being the highest point provides one of the exciting views towards City Hall and the Custom's House Tower as well as a river view on the opposite side.
- 1. Approach one, will be to contain the existing square with low buildings as a container to have uniformity of space and functions. These low buildings will provide services throughout the day and night (cafes, restaurants, bars, specialty shops even after business hours are over will bring life to the square 24-hours a day.)
- 2. Second approach is to unify the space with landscaping elements: trees, paving, fountains, urban art; all on the same level and reroute pedestrians to go through the space rather than building granite walls to keep them away (existing condition in front of State building. (Leverett Saltonstall Building). Bowdoin Square, when developed, will be a memorable place.

The new quality of the physical environment of Cambridge Street or any other street in the city will affect its economic, cultural and residential life.



\* CHARLES CIRCLE AS A  
GATEWAY TO BOSTON



1

\* CAMBRIDGE STREET AS  
AN INTERFACE FOR  
DIFFERENT FABRICS



2

\* BOWDOIN SQUARE AS A  
VESTIBULE TO GOVERNMENT  
CENTER AND CITY OF  
BOSTON.



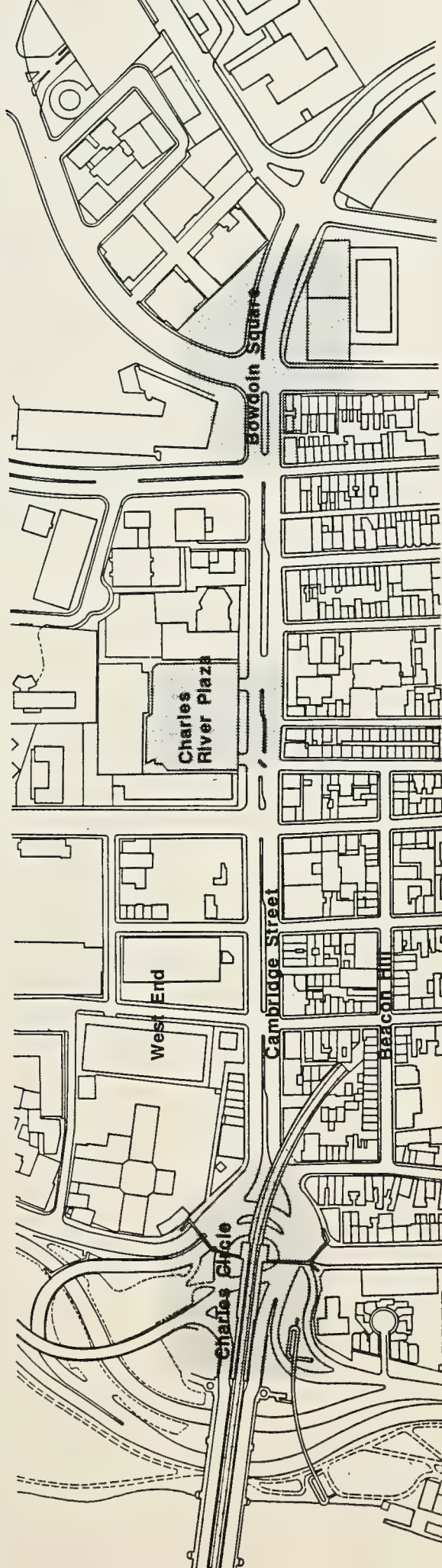
3



ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

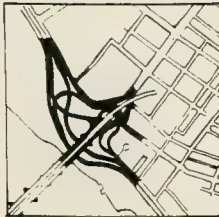






MAJOR PROBLEM    NODES WHICH REQUIRE SPECIAL ATTENTION



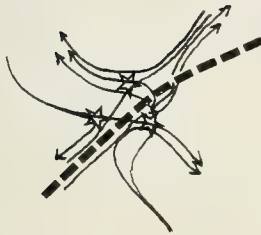


## ISSUE 1:

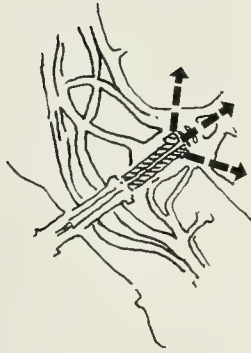
### PROBLEMS



STORROW DRIVE RAMPS AND EXITS  
CUT OFF THE ACCESS TO WATER -  
FRONT PLAYGROUND.

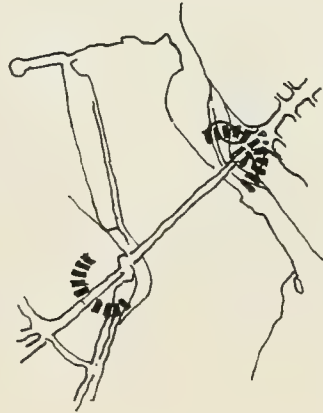


TRAFFIC CIRCULATION CAUSES  
CONFUSION IN CHARLES CIRCLE  
AREA.

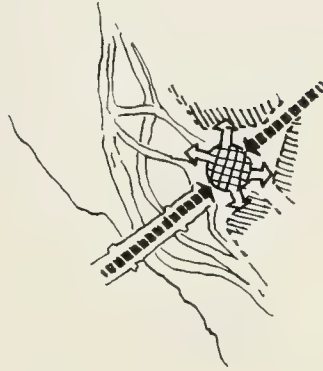


INCONVENIENT ACCESS FROM CHARLES  
STATION TO MASS. GENERAL HOSPITAL,  
BEACON HILL AND CAMBRIDGE STREET.

### POTENTIALS



CHARLES CIRCLE COULD BE DEVELOPED  
AS A PHYSICAL GATEWAY TO BOSTON  
— AS KENDAL SQUARE IN CAMBRIDGE  
OPPOSITE OF CHARLES RIVER.



CHARLES CIRCLE CAN ACCOMMODATE  
NEW COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL  
USES GENERATED BY RED LINE-BLUE  
LINE CONNECTION AND GATEWAY  
IMPROVEMENT.

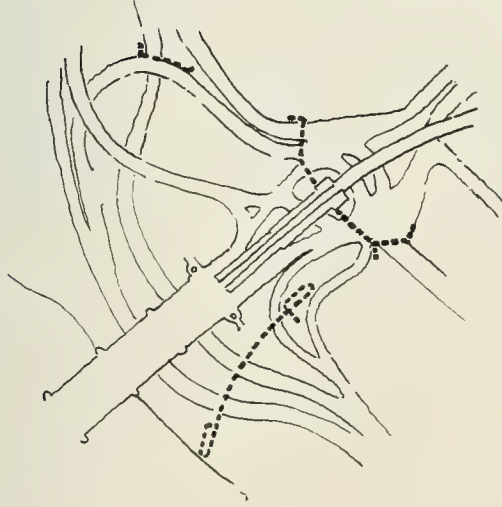
## ISSUE 1: PROBLEMS AND POTENTIALS





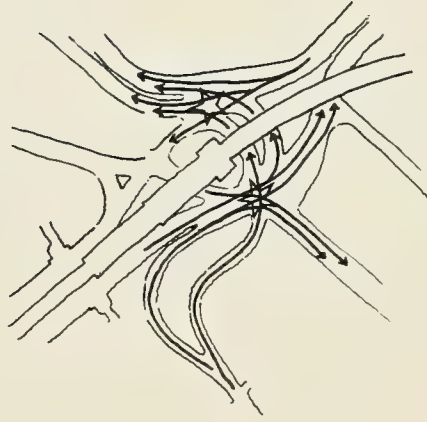
### PEDESTRIAN ACCESS

BECAUSE OF HEAVY TRAFFIC, PEDESTRIANS MUST USE BRIDGES OVER THE INTERSECTIONS. THESE LONG, HIGH PEDESTRIAN BRIDGES INCONVENIENCE PATIENTS OF M.G.H. AND ELDERLY RESIDENTS OF BEACON HILL COMMUNITY.



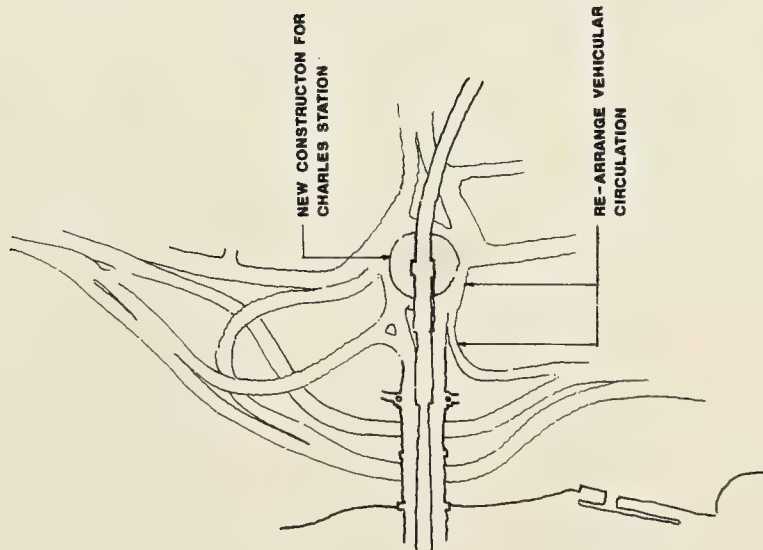
### CONFUSION NODES

THE INAPPROPRIATE VEHICULAR CIRCULATION CREATES CONFUSING TRAFFIC CONFLICTS AT CHARLES CIRCLE AREA.

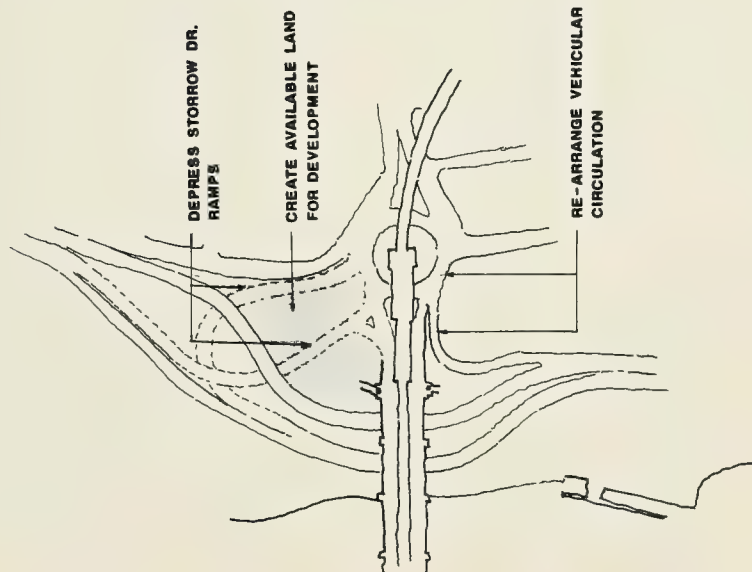


### ANALYSES AND STRATEGIES

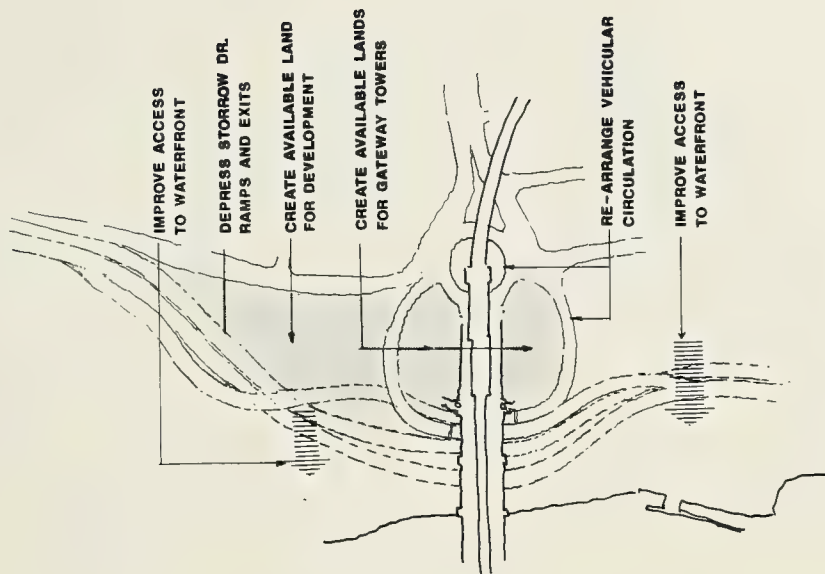




OPTION 1



OPTION 2



OPTION 3

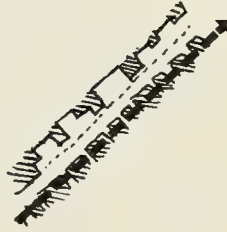
## ANALYSES AND STRATEGIES







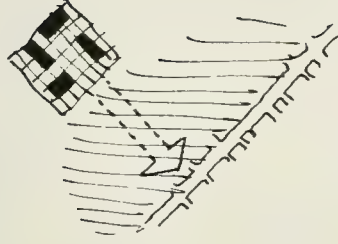
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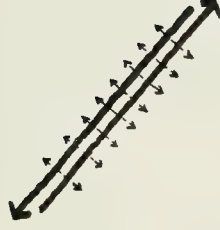
## PROBLEMS

THE INCORPORATE FABRIC IN EACH SIDE OF CAMBRIDGE STREET RESULTS IN THE 'SINGLE SIDE' ACTIVITIES.

SOUTH SIDE OF CAMBRIDGE STREET BECOMES THE NEGLECTED EDGE OF BEACON HILL COMMUNITY.



CHARLES RIVER PARK COMMUNITY IS CUT OFF FROM THE 'MAIN STREET' BY INSTITUTIONAL FACILITIES.



THROUGH TRAFFIC AND SERVICE ENTRANCE ALONG CAMBRIDGE STREET THREATEN PEDESTRIAN CONNECTOR AND STREET ACTIVITIES.

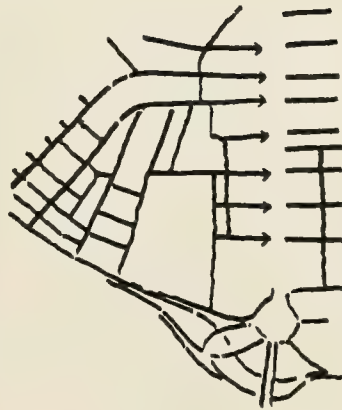
## ISSUE 2: PROBLEMS AND POTENTIALS



# STREET PATTERN IMPROVEMENT



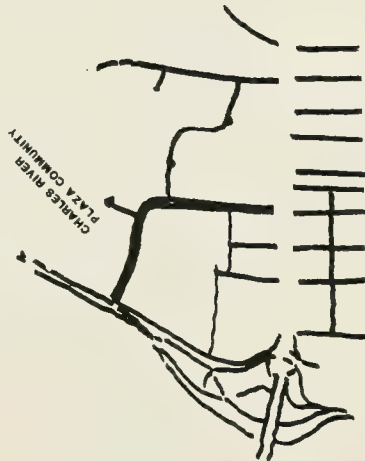
BEFORE URBAN RENEWAL



CAMBRIDGE STREET USED TO BE THE SPINE OF THE BEACON HILL AND WEST END COMMUNITIES. BOTH COMMUNITIES WERE STRONGLY CONNECTED TO CAMBRIDGE STREET WITH INTRICATE STREET PATTERNS.



EXISTING

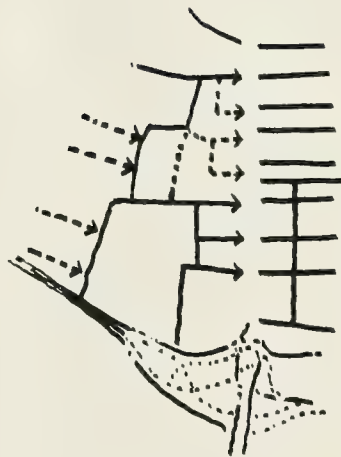


THE SUPERBLOCK DEVELOPMENT OF THE 1950'S URBAN RENEWAL PROGRAM CUT OFF THE CONNECTION BETWEEN CHARLES RIVER PLAZA COMMUNITY (PREVIOUSLY WEST END) AND CAMBRIDGE STREET.

CAMBRIDGE STREET STOPPED BEING AN ACTIVE TRANSITION SPINE BETWEEN TWO COMMUNITIES



PROPOSED



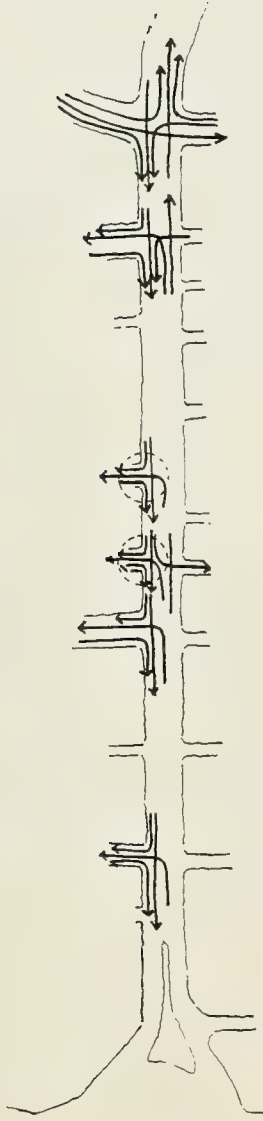
REARRANGE STREET PATTERN TO BRING BACK THE INTIMATE RELATION BETWEEN THE COMMUNITIES AND CAMBRIDGE STREET.

## ANALYSES AND STRATEGIES

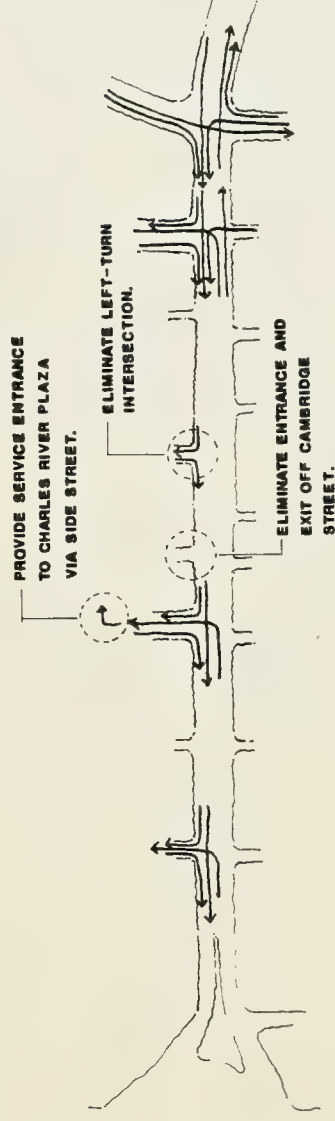




REDUCE TRAFFIC INTERSECTIONS



EXISTING CONDITION

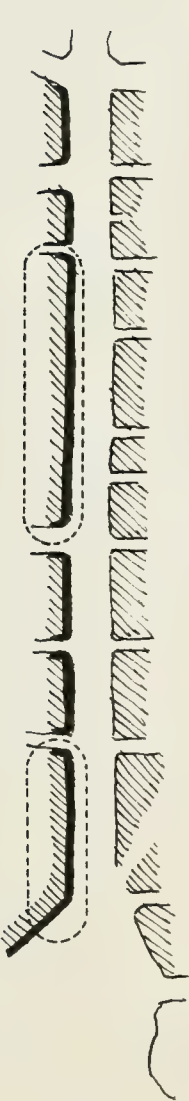


SUGGESTED IMPROVEMENT

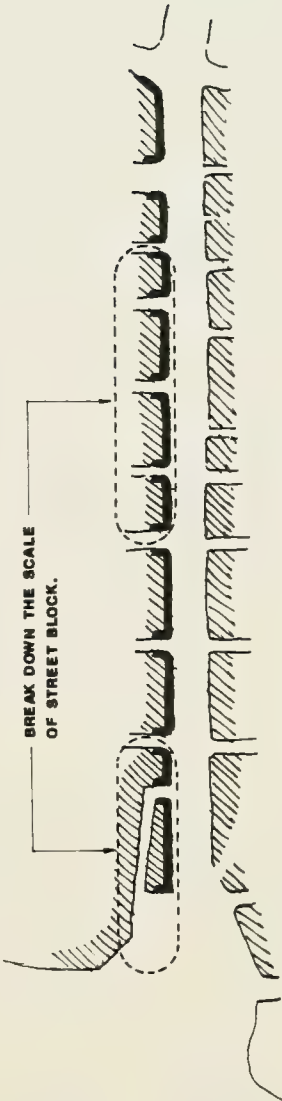
ANALYSES AND STRATEGIES



REARRANGE STREET BLOCKS



EXISTING



PROPOSED

ANALYSES AND STRATEGIES





**INCONSISTENT STREET  
PATTERN BETWEEN  
BEACON HILL AND  
WEST END AFTER URBAN  
RENEWAL.**

**THE DIFFERENCE OF SCALE IN  
STREET BLOCKS:  
ONE BLOCK ON NORTH (WEST  
END) SIDE CAN EQUAL THE  
AREA OF SEVERAL BLOCKS  
ON THE SOUTH (BEACON  
HILL) SIDE.**

**NORTH:  
BIG BUILD  
FACILITY  
BLOCK.**

**SOUTH:**  
**A SINGLE**  
**DATE SE**  
**BUILDING**

**IRON:**

**THE FRONTAGE HAS ONLY  
LIMITED DIRECT CONTACT  
WITH CAMBRIDGE STREET.**

**COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES  
ARE PUSHED AWAY FROM  
THE STREET EDGE WITH  
SEPARATION OF PARKING  
SPACES.**

**SOUTH:**

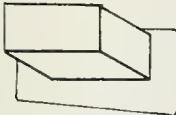
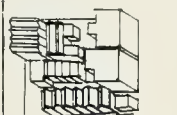

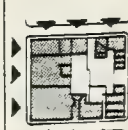


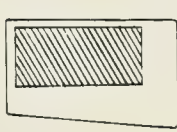
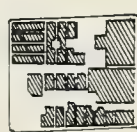

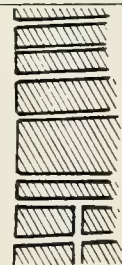


**THE FRONTAGE PROVIDES  
DIRECT CONTACT WITH  
CAMBRIDGE STREET WITH  
ACTIVITIES SUPPORTED BY  
THE PEDESTRIAN CONNEC-  
TION FROM SIDE STREETS.**

**NOATH:**

**BUILDINGS SET BACK FROM  
CAMBRIDGE STREET WITH  
ENTRANCES FROM SIDE  
STREETS OR BACK ALLEY.**

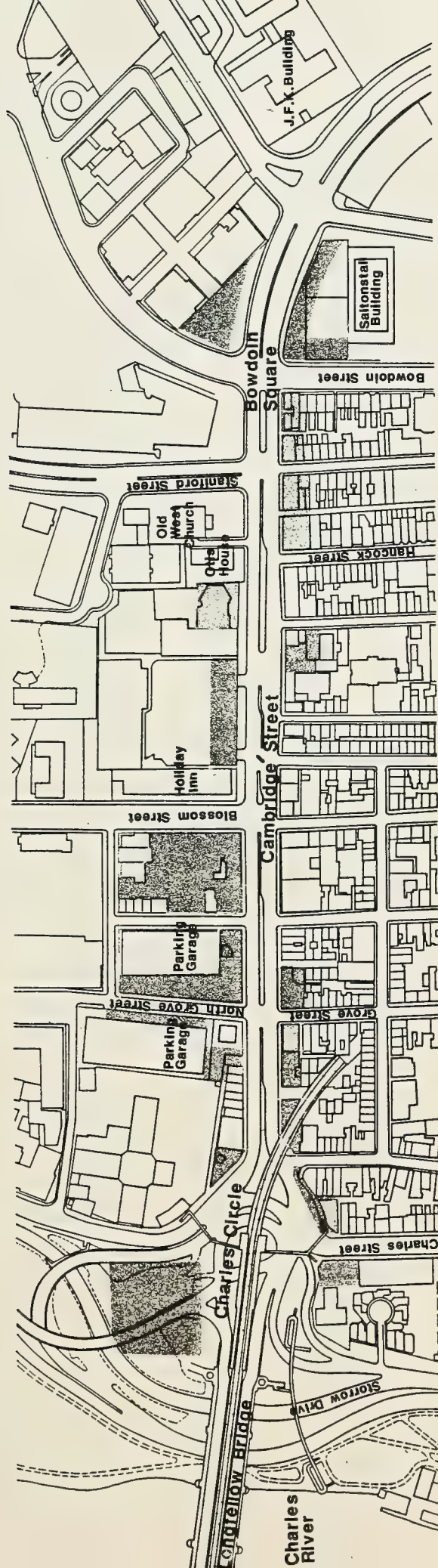
**SOUTH:**

**BUILDINGS USE STREET FRONTAGE AS ENTRANCES AROUND THE BLOCK.**

		
		
		
		
		
		
WEST END	CAMBRIDGE STREET	BEACON HILL

## ANALYSES AND STRATEGIES





EXISTING UNDERUTILIZED LAND



EXISTING UNDERUTILIZED BUILDINGS







**FRONTAGE CONTINUITY**



RECONSTRUCT THE STREET FRONTAGE TO BRING BACK INTIMATE RELATION WITH STREET AND GENERATE COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES.

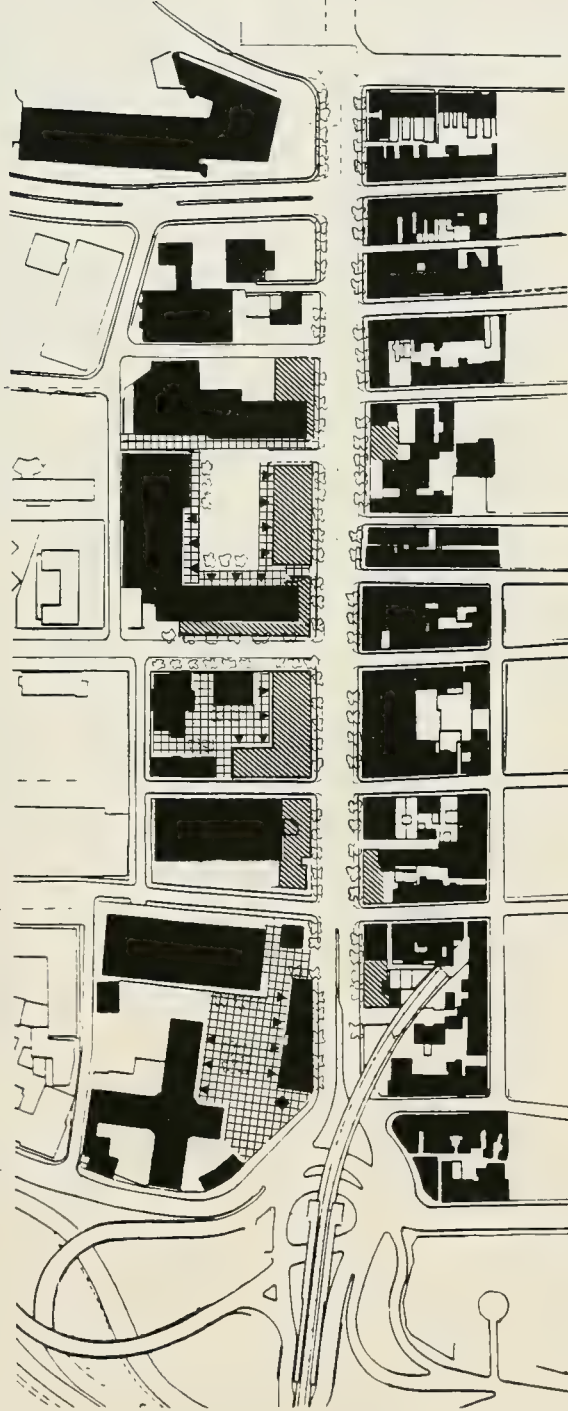
**ANALYSES AND STRATEGIES**



# OPEN SPACE IMPROVEMENT AND PEDESTRIAN CONNECTION

CONVERT SUFFOLK COUNTY  
JAIL INTO PUBLIC RELATED  
USE AND CREATE AN URBAN  
PLAZA ADJACENT TO NEW  
CHARLES STATION.

ENCOURAGE MIX-USE DEVELOPMENT  
AND CREATE MID-BLOCK COURTYARD  
FOR COMMERCIAL USES WITH DIRECT  
CONTACT TO CAMBRIDGE STREET.



EXPAND SIDEWALK AND  
IMPROVE STREETSCAPE.

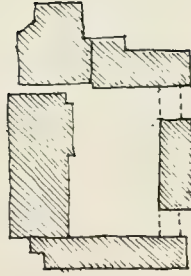
REROUTE THROUGH TRAFFIC  
BETWEEN STORROW DRIVE  
AND GOVERNMENT CENTER  
NARROW DOWN CAMBRIDGE  
STREET.

## ANALYSES AND STRATEGIES

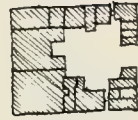
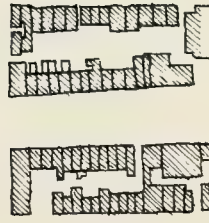




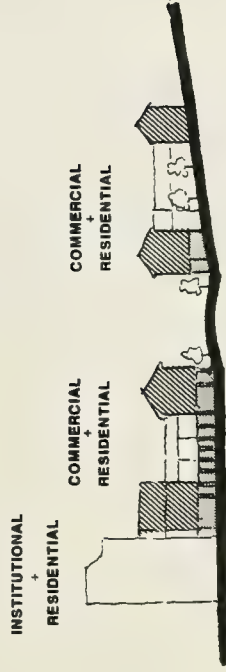
# BLOCK DEVELOPMENT PATTERN



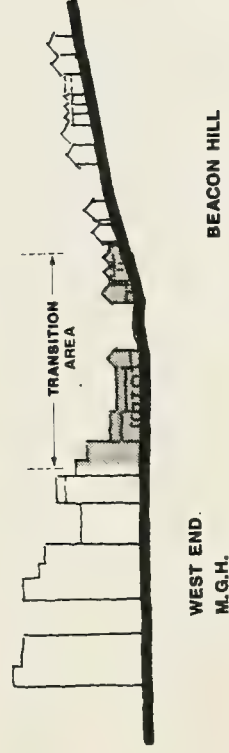
WEST END



BEACON HILL

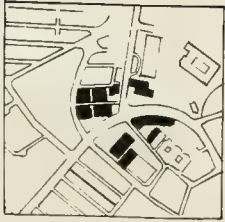


SECTION/DEVELOPMENT BLOCK



## ANALYSES AND STRATEGIES





ISSUE 3:



## PROBLEMS

LACK OF TRANSITION BETWEEN  
COMMUNITY AND MONUMENTAL  
AREA.

LACK OF SPATIAL DEFINITION  
FOR MONUMENTAL SPACES.

## POTENTIALS

CREATE A VISUAL SEQUENCE  
FOR APPROACHING GOVERNMENT  
CENTER THROUGH CAMBRIDGE  
STREET.

## ISSUE 3: PROBLEMS AND POTENTIALS





ENHANCE VISUAL SEQUENCE



EXISTING

ANALYSIS 1

ANALYSES AND STRATEGIES





ANALYSIS 2



ANALYSIS 3

ANALYSES AND STRATEGIES





OPTION 1



OPTION 2

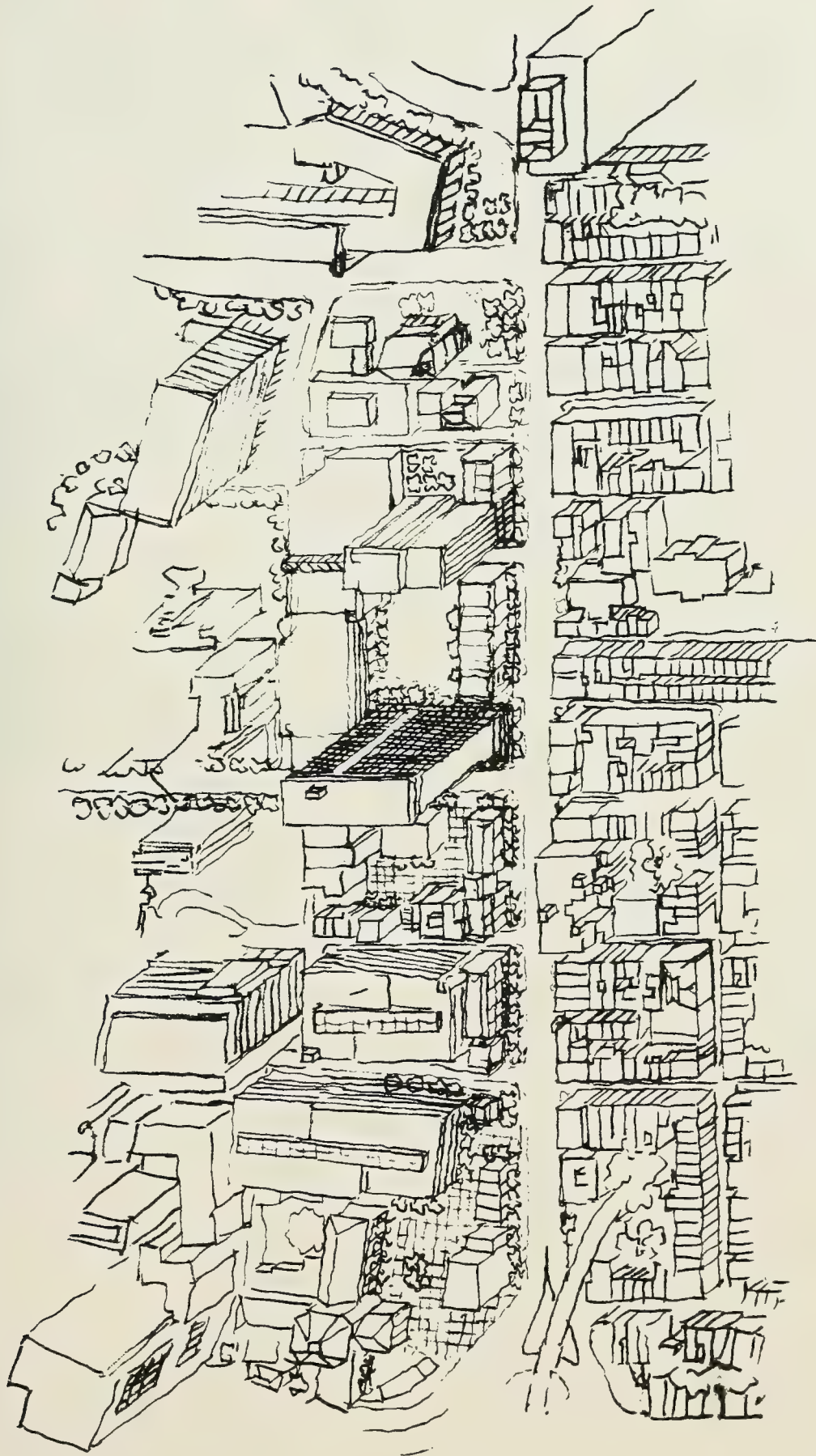


OPTION 3

# ANALYSES AND STRATEGIES



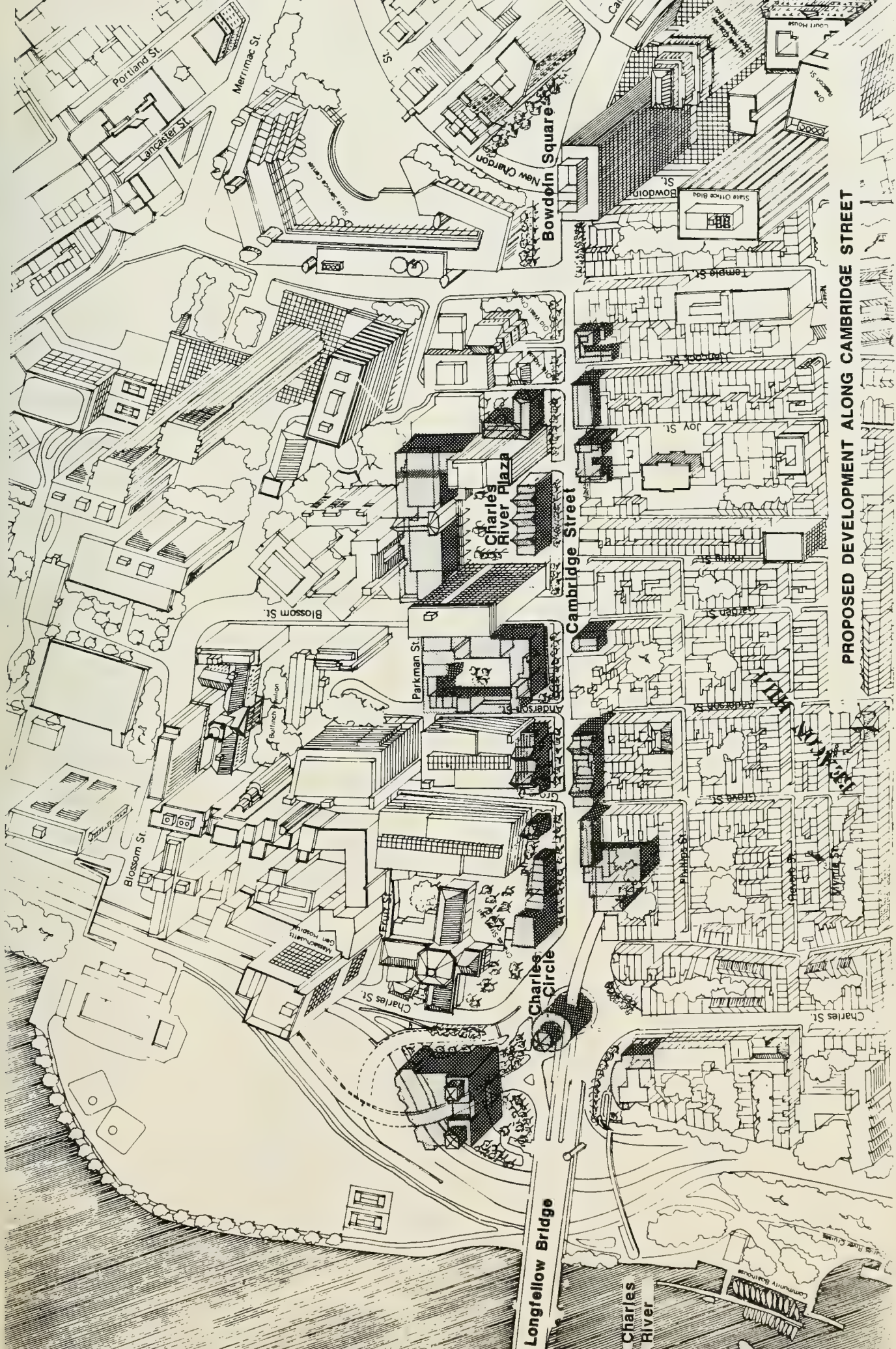




FUTURE VISION OF THE AREA



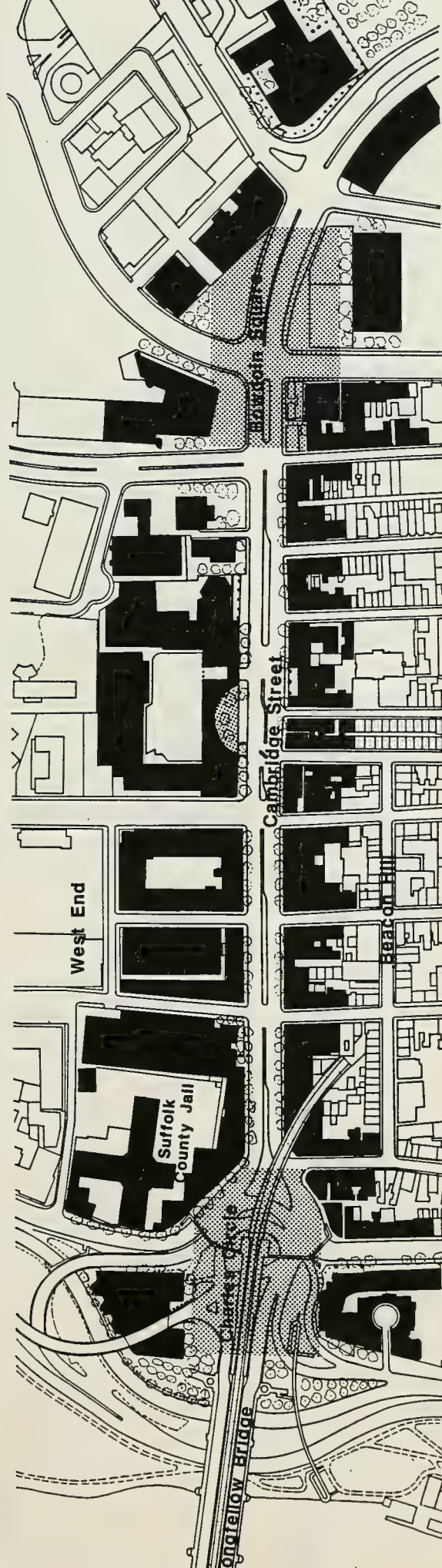




PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT ALONG CAMBRIDGE STREET

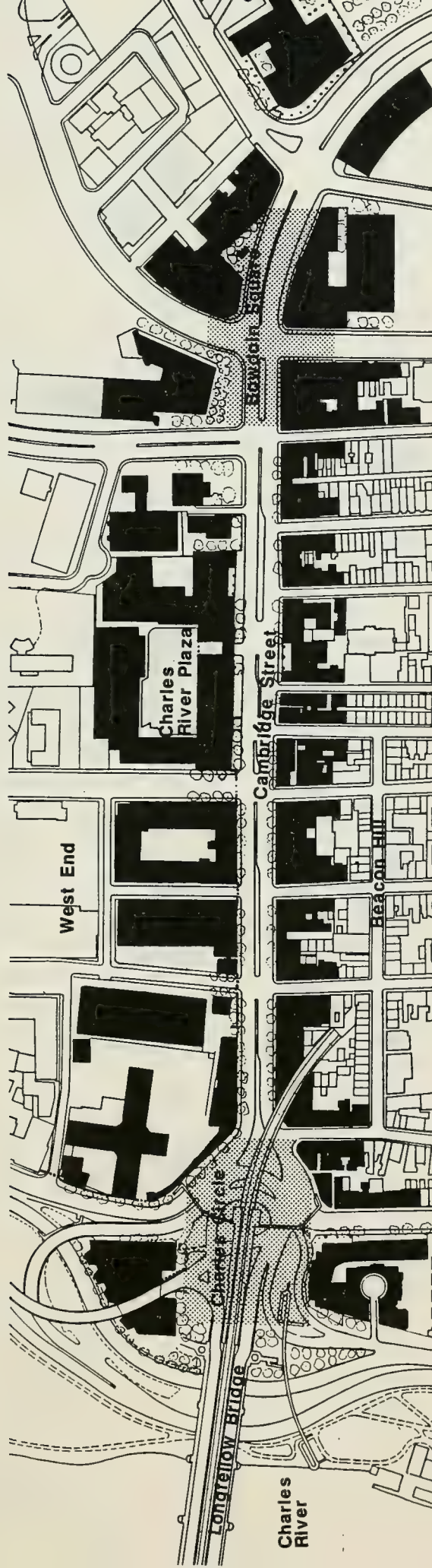






#1 FIGURE GROUND OF PROPOSED BUILDINGS and MAJOR OPEN SPACES



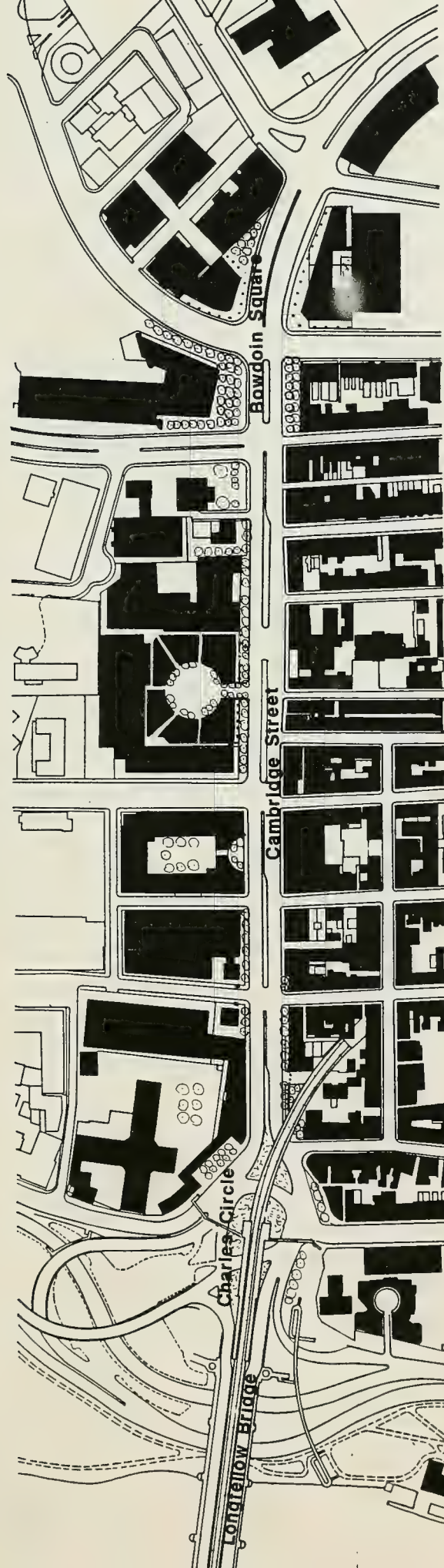


ALTERNATIVE FIGURE GROUND and MAJOR OPEN SPACES

N



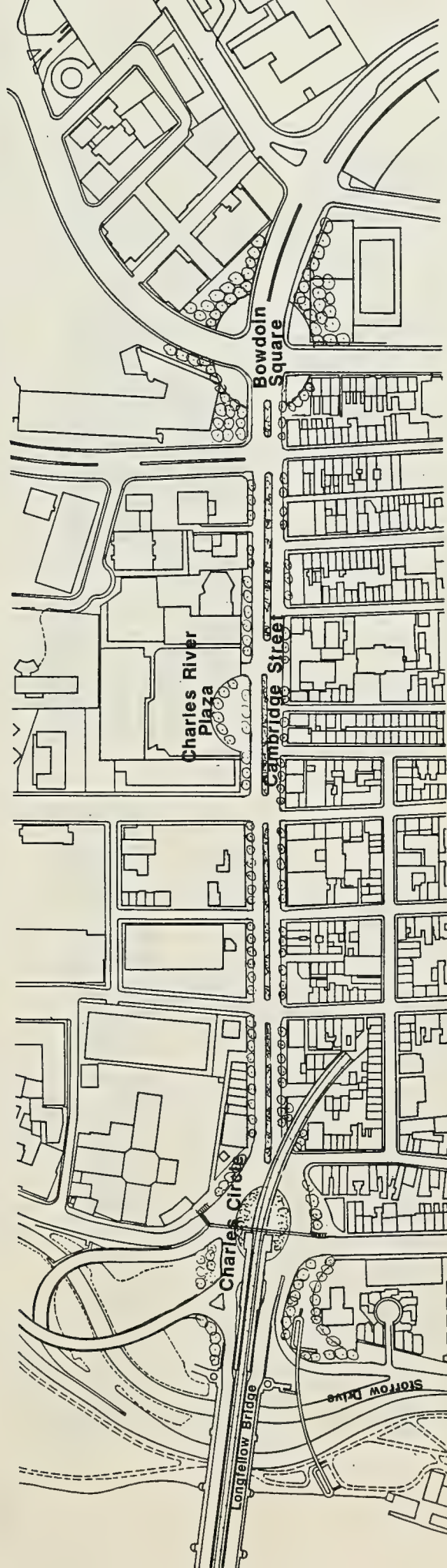




#3 FIGURE GROUND OF PROPOSED BUILDINGS AND MAJOR OPEN SPACES







PROPOSED "CAMBRIDGE BOULEVARD" and OPEN SPACES



## HISTORY

### Beacon Hill

Boston's Beacon Hill Historic District, laid out and developed in 1795-1808 with architectural standards established by the noted architect Charles Bulfinch, is one of the finest and least-altered examples of a large Early Republican or Federal Period urban area in the United States. Still nearly 90% residential in character, Beacon Hill's hundreds of Adamesque-Federal style three-and-four-story brick row houses are little-altered on the exterior and there are very few intrusions.

In 1790 Boston's Beacon Hill was a steep and rugged eminence about twice the present height and still a wilderness of rocks and brambles. In 1791 Dr. John Joy commissioned the Boston architect Charles Bulfinch to design a house in the pasture land, which turned out to be the first of a succession of celebrated Beacon Hill houses. In 1795 Boston purchased "Hancock's Pastures" as the site of the projected new State Capitol. Built in 1795-97, designed by Bulfinch and located north of the Boston Common on the slope of Beacon Hill, the new Massachusetts State House led to the residential development of the Beacon Hill slopes west to the State Capitol.

In 1795 the Mount Vernon Proprietors, a group of aristocratic Bostonian real estate speculators, acquired this pasture land to the west of the State House and used a grid pattern to lay out a street system for their project. According to a private agreement, each of the proprietors was to build himself a mansion along the highest ridge (Mount Vernon Street) of Beacon Hill, thus setting a standard for the subsequent architectural development of the project, which was to consist of large detached houses set in spacious gardens. Bulfinch, one of the original proprietors, also served as architect for the project. As it turned out, of the proprietors, only Harrison Gray Otis, Jonathan Mason, and Bulfinch fulfilled their mansion obligation. In 1800-02 Bulfinch designed and built large houses for Mason (now demolished) and the house at 85 Mount Vernon Street for Otis.

### The Problem:

In 1955 and 1958 the Massachusetts Legislature designated approximately 50 acres of Beacon Hill as the Beacon Hill Historic District. The protected area extended from Beacon Street up the southern slope to the crest of the hill at Pinckney Street. In November 1962 the Beacon Hill Historic District was designated as a Registered National Historic Landmark. In August 1963 the Massachusetts Legislature enlarged the Historic District by adding about 70 more acres. This addition extended the State boundaries from the crest of Beacon Hill (Pinckney Street) down the northern slope to Cambridge Street. The Registered National Historic Landmark and the State boundaries for the Beacon Hill District have therefore not coincided since 1963 and the problem is, if the added area is of sufficient quality, to justify the expansion of the National Landmark boundaries to agree with those established by the State in 1963.

### Condition of the Northern Slope Area of Beacon Hill:

The northern slope is occupied by hundreds of three-and-four-story brick row houses dating from the Federal Period. It also includes a number of brick row residences built between 1830 and 1880. The added area has few intrusions and helps protect the entire Beacon Hill area against further high-rise development and modern intrusions. Generally, the exteriors of the northern slope buildings are little altered and the structures are in good condition.

### Boundaries of Beacon Hill Historic District Registered National Landmark, as Established in 1962:

"(Chapter 616, Acts of 1955, as Amended by Chapters 314 and 315, Acts of 1958). An Act Creating the Historic Beacon Hill Historic District in the City of Boston and Establishing in the Building Department of Said City The Beacon Hill Architectural Commission and Defining Its Powers and Duties.





Be it enacted, etc., as follows:

"Section 1. Creation of the District: There is hereby created in the City of Boston a district to be known as the Historic Beacon Hill District, bounded as follows: southerly by the northerly side of Beacon Street; westerly by a line parallel with, an done hundred and fifty feet distant westerly from, the westerly side of Beaver Street; northerly by Beaver Place; easterly by Brimmer Street; northerly again by Byron Street; westerly again by a line parallel with, and eighty feet distant westerly from, the westerly side line of Charles Street; northerly again by the southerly side line of Revere Street; easterly again by the westerly side line of Myrtle Street; and easterly again by the westerly side line of Hancock Street and the said side line extended southerly to Beacon Street; excluding, however, from said area land of the commonwealth and the estates numbered twenty-six to eighty-eight, inclusive, and ninety-eight to one hundred and thirty-six, inclusive, on Myrtle Street.

"\*Section 1A. The historic Beacon Hill district created by section one is hereby enlarged and extended to include an area contiguous thereto, bounded as follows: southerly by Byron Street; westerly by Brimmer Street; southerly again by Beaver Place; westerly again by Embankment Road; northerly by Pinckney Street; and easterly by a line parallel with, and eighty feet westerly from, the westerly line of Charles Street. (Stat. 1958, Ch. 3).

"Section 1C. The Historic Beacon Hill District, created by section one and enlarged and extended by sections one A and one B, is hereby further enlarged and extended to include an area contiguous thereto bounded as follows northerly by a line parallel to and forty feet distant southerly from the southerly sideline of Cambridge Street; easterly by Bowdoin Street; southerly by Derne and Myrtle Streets; westerly by Irving Street; generally southerly by the northerly, easterly and westerly boundaries of the area defined in section one B; southerly by Revere Street; westerly and northerly by Embankment Road; and northerly by Charles Street Circle, and including the estates located at 131 and 141 Cambridge Street and 2-16 Lynde Street. Approved August 8, 1963."

In its present enlarged form the Beacon Hill Historic District is generally bounded as follows: By Beacon Street on the south side; by Embankment Road on the west side; by Cambridge Street on the north side; and by Bowdoin, Myrtle, Hancock, Mount Vernon, and Joy Streets on the east side.

#### West End: History

Originally, the West End was a dense grid of streets and avenues that lay at the bottom of the former slopes of the trimountain (Beacon, Pemberton, and Mt. Vernon) on the west with the Mill Pond at its easterly edge.

In the 18th century, fashionable Bostonians built grand mansions here. One that survived is the first of three houses that Charles Bulfinch built for Harrison Gray Otis, one of Boston's greatest land speculators and a distinguished cultivator of architecture (Lyndon 1982). Next door is the Otis House is Old West Church, built in 1806 just ten years after the Otis House. It was designed by a Bulfinch protege Asher Benjamin who helped to popularize the leaner, cleaner refined Federal style of Bulfinch's Boston in his book The American Builder's Companion. In 1862, the space in front of this church was fashioned and named Lowell Square as a part of a movement to create small squares in imitation of Boston Common (Kay 1980). By the mid-19th century the West End was largely built with small dwelling houses in either the Federal or Greek Revival styles.

The West End's distant location and access to breezes, thought to be healthy, were among the reasons for the location of the country's first general hospital, open to all, Massachusetts General Hospital in 1819. The area's remoteness was also a factor in the decision to locate the new Suffolk County Jail there in 1854. In the later half of the century, West End development intensified as new immigrants to Boston required housing. Like the North End, small dwelling houses were gradually replaced by three- and four-story brick tenements and streets became more densely packed. Throughout the century the West End experienced a great deal of institutional development as well.



In the 1950's, city planners determined that the area was blighted and they inaugurated the now obsolete practice of total slum clearance. Their goal was to create a city district of a totally new character. Using federal funds, they cleared the crowded streets and brick tenements and built high income luxury apartment buildings. The disruption to the social fabric of the neighborhood is legendary, and a genesis of one of Jane Jacob's treatises on cities.

#### Otis (First Harrison Gray) House (1795-96): History

Designed by Charles Bulfinch and erected in 1795-96, the First Harrison Gray Otis House is the prototype of the distinguished series of five-bay wide three-story brick Adamesque urban mansions that were built in New England during the Federal period. Its interiors also provide one of the earliest instances of the Adam influence in New England.

The noted lawyer-politician Harrison Gray Otis acquired the lot for this townhouse at the corner of Cambridge and Lynde Streets in 1793. Construction was underway by June 17, 1795 and the residence was completed in 1796. The house was assessed at \$8,000 in 1797. Charles Bulfinch based his plan for the Otis House on the William Bingham House in Philadelphia, which the architect had seen in 1789. The Bingham House, in turn, had been modeled after Manchester House in London. Otis lived in his new house until 1801, when he sold the property to Thomas Osborn.

The exterior of the Otis House underwent considerable alteration during the 19th century and was in poor condition when purchased in 1916 as headquarters for the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities Restoration, supervised by William Sumner Appleton, began in 1916 and continued until 1920. A projecting one-story "storm porch" was removed from the front door and the existing central Palladian window in the second story and the fanlight in the third story were both reconstructed. On the basis of an 1834 woodcut, the existing projecting semi-circular porch was built in a conjectural manner on the front elevation. In 1926 Cambridge Street was widened and the house was moved back 40 feet on its original lot.

Further restoration work was accomplished under the direction of Abbott Lowell Cummings in 1960. The 19th century cornice of brick was removed and replaced by a carefully reconstructed copy of the original wood one. This replica was based on fragments of the original one, which its cone-like ornaments, had survived on the rear of the building. Later, dormers were also removed from the roof and the large second-story withdrawing room was furnished with a meticulous copy of the original wallpaper.

The First Harrison Gray Otis House is now undergoing further restoration. These plans call for the removal of the 1916-20 reconstructed semi-circular porch to complete the restoration of the main facade to the original Bulfinch design and for the reproduction of additional wallpapers and early paint colors in the other principal rooms.

#### Old West Church (1806): History

Designed by the noted Boston architect Asher Benjamin and built in 1806, Old West Church is an early and highly successful example of a monumentally-scaled church constructed in the then-new Federal-Adamesque style. Widely copied throughout New England, Old West Church is still considered to be one of the finest of Benjamin's churches. The structure has been little-altered on the exterior, but its interior was considerably changed during the 19th century and has required extensive restoration to return it to its original appearance.

Old West Church was designed by Asher Benjamin, builder and architect, in 1806 for use as a Congregational meetinghouse. The last church service was held in the building on April 18, 1892. The structure was then remodelled on the interior, reopened as a Branch Public Library on February 3, 1896, and served this purpose until 1960. An order of General Court of Massachusetts made the closed library building available to the Methodist Conference in 1962. In 1963 the interior of the old church was restored to its early 19th century appearance and the structure was reopened on May 10, 1964 as a United Methodist Church.





### Resident Physician's House (1891): History

The Residents Physician's House is a freestanding transitional Colonial Revival style building executed in red brick. Its original use was a private, one-family residence of the general director (then called Resident Physician or Superintendent) of the Massachusetts General Hospital. Offices and a clinic of the Department of Psychiatry presently occupy the building.

Constructed in 1891, the Resident Physician's House is a transitional Colonial Revival style building with some Queen Anne type features. The house is two and a half stories high and two bays wide across its planar facade. Its basic plan is rectangular (29' x 40' x 42'), with a projecting octagonal bay with slightly rounded corners on its west wall. It originally fronted on Blossom Street and was set upon a cut granite foundation. On its current site, rotated 90 degrees to face toward the south, the house rests upon a low concrete block foundation. A granite ashlar foundation remains along its Blossom Street elevation.

The exterior walls of the house are of machine-pressed salmon-red brick, laid in a running bond with narrow raked joints of red-colored mortar. The splayed doorway and lintel voussoirs are of gauged brick, and the high water table is formed of molded brick. A wide, but slightly projecting, brick belt course bands around the building beneath the second story window sills. A smaller belt course on the north and south facades extends above the second floor window lintels. The window sills, now painted black to match the doorway and window trim, are of tooled brownstone.

The pitched roof rises at a 45-degree angle and is covered with slate shingles. Two wide slate-covered dormers, with pitched roofs and pediments, are symmetrically positioned on the south roof slope. A third pedimented dormer is on the north roof slope. Beside it, a fourth dormer, with a hipped roof, abuts the side chimney. A large interior chimney on the south roof slope is positioned near the roof edge. A second and more prominent chimney, with weatherings, extends up the entire north elevation of the house. Both chimneys have two decorative string courses and three oval-shaped terra cotta chimney pots. The construction date of the house is incised in a rectangular brownstone block set into the brick of the exterior rear chimney.

Underlying the roof are cooper gutters, flashing, a downspouts. The projecting cornice consists of coursed brick and a finely detailed egg-and-dart molding of glazed terra cotta. The full cornice continues into the short gable returns.

The fenestration expresses the informal plan of the interior and is generally irregular. On the south facade are two symmetrical bays and large 12-over-2 windows. The windows on the west and north facades at 12-over-1, 9-over-1 on the Blossom Street facade, and 8-over-1 in the dormers. At the attic level of the gable ends are round-headed windows with Federal style glazing. A similar arched opening exists on the north wall at the staircase landing. The fenestration also has a slight graduation in story heights.

The side-hall main entrance has a broad five-paneled door, above which are three transom lights. The rear entrance has a similar door, with a glass panel, and the addition for an overhanging hood with asphalt shingles. An access ramp, in plywood and painted gray, leads to the rear doorway.

A French door on the west facade opens out from the two-story bay onto a low open terrace. Reconstructed in 1981, the terrace has a poured concrete floor enclosed by a brick wall with wide untinted mortar joints and slate coping. It replaces the original conservatory lost during the relocation of the house.

The interior (which is not under consideration for designation) displays the metal wall partitions and acoustic ceiling tiles of contemporary offices. Original interior features are preserved notably in the first floor: the raised chair rails; and elaborate overmantle piece in the parlor, with a beveled glass mirror; Roman brickwork (now painted) in the fireplace surrounds; and decorative inset panels beneath the first floor windows. The balustrered staircase is detailed in a restrained Federal Revival manner with a paneled newel post and a capping urn piece.

Flanking the house along its Blossom Street facade are two brick walls. The one to the south, designed by Shepley, Bulfinch, Richardson, and Abbott in 1931, is a Georgian Revival garden wall, eight feet high and laid in Flemish bond. It has an arched opening with an iron gate, which leads to the small yard in front of the Physician's House. The common brick wall attached to the northeast corner of the building has been shortened recently and is ten feet in height.

Originally a paneled brick wall with iron cresting separated the house from Blossom Street.





### Suffolk County Jail: History

The Suffolk County Jail has major national architectural significance as the prime institutional example of Boston Granite Style of the mid-19th century. The design was executed by one of the foremost exponents of the style, Gridley J.F. Bryant. In addition, the jail is the definitive example of an enlightened 19th century attitude toward the treatment of prisoners.

The plan to build the jail was promoted in the 1940's by numerous complaints about the 1822 Leverett Street Jail. The first proposal for a replacement came from Mayor Martin Brimmer at his inaugural in 1843. Brimmer, a social activist, stepped into the ongoing controversy over prison accommodations on the side of the so-called Auburn Plan. This prison system, developed in 1820 in New York State, was based on the premise that prisoners should not be kept in continuous solitary confinement. Individual cells should be for sleeping only; a prison, went the argument, should provide room for communal work and exercise. The established practice of the time, known as the Pennsylvania System as established at the Eastern Penitentiary in Cherry Hill, PA, (John Haviland 1821-25) and followed at Leverett Street, was that prisons house inmates in individual cells opening into individual exercise yards. Little useful work could be induced for prisoners under this system, and the Quaker ideal of solitude inducing contrition (the basis for the system) did not work out in fact. The results were poor physical and emotional health for the inmates, and a high price for the taxpayers.

The city did not follow Mayor Brimmer's proposal, and the plan was left to his successor, Josiah Quincy, Jr. Like his famous father, the second Mayor of Boston, Quincy was a reformer who maintained the tradition of advocating social justice. During his term (1846-49), Quincy faced some major challenges: Boston's population was to double in the period from 1825 to 1850, and with the great immigration from the famine in Ireland now under way, Quincy's city faced a squeeze for space and burgeoning social upheaval. Quincy saw to public safety improvements, but the proposed new jail caused a split between the two branches of the municipal government. The Aldermen, eight members elected at-large, endorsed Quincy's replacement proposal, but the Common Council, 48 members elected by wards, came down in opposition. In 1848, the city solicitor resolved the dispute by ruling that as Suffolk County Commissioners the Mayor and Aldermen were to make the decision, and that the Common Council had no say in the matter. Quincy and the Aldermen acted quickly, abandoning a proposal for a joint jail and house of correction. The site, on landfill next to the Massachusetts General Hospital, was selected in part as a way to provide reasonable breeze and climate. By the end of Quincy's term, the contracts to construct the jail were approved.

However, no sooner did Quincy's successor, John Prescott Bigelow, assume office that he proposed that the new jail plan be scrapped and the old Leverett Street facility be renovated to suit the new needs. The Alderman, recognizing the Mayor's concern over costs, amended the plans. Finally in 1851, eight years after the first proposal, the "New Jail" at Charles Street was ready for occupancy at a cost of \$450,000, including land and building. The commission to design the jail went to Gridley J.F. Bryant (1816-1899), whose career in architecture spanned most of the second half of the 19th century. Trained in the office of Alexander Parris, architect of the Quincy Market building, Bryant had one of the most successful practices in Boston of this time. Throughout New England he was known for designing state capitols, city halls, hospitals, jails, courthouses, and other public institutions. In Boston he designed warehouses, wharf buildings and storeblocks; in fact, to many in the mid-19th century, Boston was a Bryant-built city. Although the Great Fire of 1872 destroyed 152 of Bryant's buildings, some of his proudest works remain, including Old City Hall (with Arthur Gilman), Mercantile Wharf Building, and the State Street Block.

Bryant was largely responsible for the success of the Boston Granite style. Some of the engineer-owner of the Granite Railway and Quincy Quarries, he learned quickly the construction possibilities of the stone. Advances in technology made large blocks more available to Bryant than to his predecessors. In his relatively simple designs, granite lent an air of strength and dignity appropriate for the era and for Bostonians' sensibilities. Modern-day critics such as Giedion, Huxtable, and Hitchcock have recognized Bryant as a major contributor to 19th century commercial architecture.

Bryant's design for the Suffolk County Jail is a high point of the mature phase of the local style of the period, now acclaimed as the Boston granite school. Architects of wharves, warehouses and civic structures also used this material, available cheaply from nearby quarries. The large granite blocks typical of the style are intended to convey a sense of boldness, endurance and permeability, attributes important in creating the public image of a penal institution. As a result of its outstanding architectural design and layout, the jail was the first American building (other than a monument) to be published in the English architectural magazine, The Builder, in 1849. The jail is dominant in the streetscape, typical of the granite school and of Bryant.

Collaborating with Bryant on the functional design of the jail was the Reverend Louis Dwight, founder and secretary of the Prison Discipline



Society of Boston. Dwight was "one of the nation's first professional penologists, and the principal advocate of the Auburn System. Dwight's extensive travels along the eastern seaboard and abroad had exposed him to the whole spectrum of correctional architecture as it then existed." (Mackay, p.4). While some prisons at the time were using the individual pen-like system used at the Leverett Street Jail, others still housed prisoners in open wards.

The Prison Discipline Society was founded primarily to advocate provision of separate cells for prisoners at night, and to emphasize the virtues of the Auburn Plan for new prisons. "The difference in the amount of sin in the world, in this country alone, consequent upon this change from the crowded night rooms of prisons without supervision, and in prisons where the prisoners are confined in separate cells, in silence, under careful supervision, is beyond all human calculation." (Prison Discipline Society, 1854, p. 823). A second purpose of the Society was to provide religious education and evangelism: "To supply the Bible, and preached Gospel, and means of grace to the prisoners." (ibid.) The Suffolk County Jail was held as an example for other jurisdictions contemplating new institutions. The Society called on New York, Baltimore, Washington, New Orleans to "come forward and demolish these Old Jails, these 'committee rooms of mischief,' and substitute for them something like the Boston New Jail..." (Prison Discipline Society, op. cit., p. 821).

The collaboration of Bryant and Dwight produced a design for the jail which uses radiating wings for cell blocks, a plan for institutional structures dating as early as 1628. The cruciform shape used in the Suffolk County Jail first appeared in England in 1790 at the Suffolk County Jail in Ipswich. William Blackburn, a London architect who died in 1790, designed the Suffolk Jail in England as one of many arrangements of cell buildings around a central governor's house. Among these were "fan-shaped arrays, Greek crosses, a central hall flanked by two wings, a multi-angled building in a half-circle around the governor's house, etc." (Johnson, p. 23). The radial design proved most popular in Britain, but examples also exist from the early 19th

century in Moscow, Geneva and Palermo. In Paris, the Petite Roquette Prison developed as a hexagonal shape with spokes radiating to a central administration building. Prisons designed under the Pennsylvania System often picked up the radial plan: Haviland's authentic examples at Cherry Hill, PA, and Trenton, NJ, used this radial system.

The humanitarian approach to the jail design was reflected by features not directly related to its architectural style. "The site is airy, being exposed and open to the bay, Charles River, and Cambridge on the west; it is level on the surface, and easily drained, extending to tide water... It is not far removed from the Court House; and it is of easy and pleasant access for the intelligent and humane." (Prison Discipline Society, 1849, p. 321). Besides communal exercise yards and other Auburn Plan features, the jail added natural light through wall and cell windows, plus the added benefit of radiant heat from the sun, along with a complete ventilating system. Other innovations included security against fire, the size of rooms and cells (large for its time), ease of maintenance, and a convenient circulation pattern. The cruciform design allowed the separation of debtors and witnesses from pre-trial detainees, and of women from men, by designation of each wing for one class of residents. Masons for the construction were Joel Wheeler and Asa Swallow.

Most contemporary Boston guidebooks took note of the jail's impact. "The plan has been so highly approved that it has been adopted in the enlargement of the State Prison at Charlestown, in the new Almshouse in Cambridge, the new prison at Dedham, and in the new jail in Concord, New Hampshire. Proposals are also made for buildings, on a similar plan... at Northampton, Providence, New York, New Jersey, and Baltimore." (Boston Almanac, 1851). In 1884, H.H. Richardson used the jail as a model for the jail portion of his Allegheny County Complex in Pittsburgh, PA.

History information was collected through several sources which can be found at "Landmarks Office, City Hall, Boston.







View along South Side



North Grove St/Cambridge St. Intersection

across Charles River Plaza





Suffolk County Jail



Physician's House





View along North Side

Blossom/Cambridge Street Intersection



Charles River Plaza







Longfellow Bridge, Charles River and Cambridge beyond



Charles Circle and T-Station





View towards Beacon Hill



View towards Bowdoin Sq.





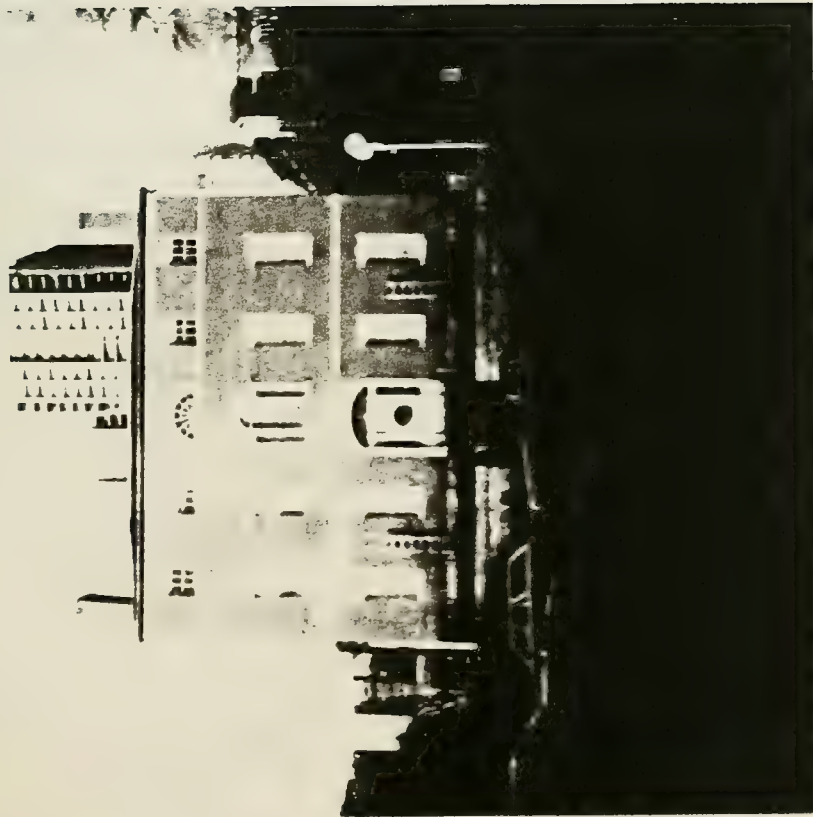


View towards Clith Hall and Custom's House Tower (East)



View towards Charles Circle (West)





Otis House



Old West Church













